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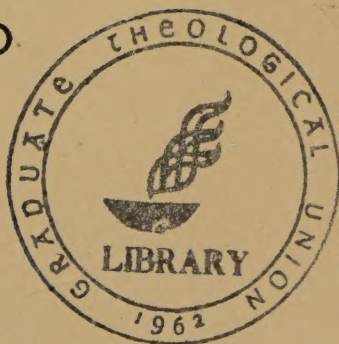


THE WAKEFIELDS

A STORY OF THE
SEVENTEENTH
CENTURY BAPTISTS

BY

S. J. FORD



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THE WAKELANDS

THE WAKELANDS
A HISTORY OF THE
WAKELANDS
FROM 1800 TO 1900

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TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY BELOVED WIFE,
GRACE,
WHOSE NAME IS GIVEN
TO THE HEROINE OF
THE STORY

S.J.F.

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FICTITIOUS CHARACTERS

THE WAKEFIELDS.

MAURICE LISTUN.

MARGARET LISTUN.

SALINIE LISTUN.

GERALD LISTUN.

REBECCA LISTUN.

CAPTAIN BONIFACE.

GOODMAN APPERLY.

GOODMAN LUSTY.

ROBERT SLYMAN.

JACK MAKEHASTE.

MASTER DULLHEAD.

GEORGE DERVILLE, Senr.

GEORGE DERVILLE, Junr.

JOAN DERVILLE.

JOHN ANYSIDE.

The original of George Derville, Junr., is John Hillier. Historical characters like William and Martha Listun and their daughter, Kathleen Terrill and Hannah Gifford, in the absence of definite history, move in the story at intervals as fictional beings.

INTRODUCTION

IN the WAKEFIELD FAMILY an attempt is made to reproduce the life and activities of a group of Puritans, who were led against their wills to break away from old customs, and the recognised conventions of the day, so as to approximate their lives, as far as their knowledge directed them, to the Christian standard of Apostolic times.

Very reluctant were they to separate themselves from the church of their fathers, lest, in so doing, they would harm the Church of Christ. But when after years of thought and prayer they saw no alternative, then, armed with the authority of God's Word, they took their stand and dared the combined opposition of Church and State.

Never was the invincibility of right more singularly demonstrated than in their experience. The battle was long drawn out, for the combatants on both sides were resolute, but in the end the Puritans triumphed.

The earlier chapters introduce the characters who are to bear the brunt of the battle; while the later chapters illustrate the swaying movements of the conflict, and the heroic way the early Baptists championed their religious convictions.

The WAKEFIELDS are fictitious persons in whom are gathered up the principal experiences of Baptists throughout the country, during those critical years, from 1638 to 1688.

But across this field of fiction great historic personages march, with majestic tread and glowing eyes, towards their glorious goal, and awake in every thoughtful reader a deep sense of gratitude for their dauntless courage, patient endurance, and stupendous self-sacrifice.

Charming love scenes ; exciting adventures ; pathetic incidents ; amusing episodes, and amazing escapes from bottle-necked predicaments, through native skill and ingenuity, make the WAKEFIELD FAMILY a delightfully readable volume.

Bristol has been chosen as the seat of the story, not because the Baptists there were of finer quality than elsewhere, but because in this city they had to contend with a resistance more *continuously* oppressive and malignant.

Should anyone suppose that Bristol's leading dignitaries are unfairly portrayed, he has only to consult the records to find that the historian's description of them is much less favourable to a worthy reputation.

While it has been the author's aim to maintain the chronological order of all the historical events referred to, yet occasionally he has been led to deviate from this order by fitting the references into the most appropriate places in the story.

The principal sources of information are : Pryce's "History of Bristol," Dr. W. T. Whitley's "History of Baptists," the famous "Broadmead Records," and the records of the Pithay Church, which very closely intertwine.

I am very indebted to Dr. W. T. Whitley, F.R.Hist.S., for reading the manuscript and giving me many valuable suggestions, which I have incorporated in the story.

It is with much trepidation I have called the WAKE-FIELD FAMILY out of dark obscurity to become the friends and companions of men and women, whose sterling qualities, like glittering gems, relieve the sombre hues of the unromantic seventeenth century days, lest, by some faltering step or timid, halting word they should become unworthy associates of such truly noble souls.

Trusting that in nothing, through my own conscious limitations, the family of fiction will dim the lustre of the great historic comrades portrayed in this volume, I send it forth with the hope that the readers as well as the author may fall under the spell of the heroic pioneers of the modern Baptist Church.

S. J. FORD.

CHAPTER I

OLD AND NEW MOORINGS

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."
—*Tennyson.*

IN the year 1638, a handsome young officer, newly married, arrived in Bristol to fill a post of great importance, in the fine old Bristol Castle. Captain Lionel Wakefield came of an old aristocratic family which had fallen upon evil times.

His wife was devoutly religious, after the fashion of the Church of England at that period. He, himself, was a churchman, but with very little piety. In politics Lionel Wakefield was a stern Royalist, and a staunch supporter of the divine right of kings. Their home was made in a stately mansion inside the castle walls, adjacent to the castle green, which commanded, over the parapet, a magnificent view of the wooded hills that surrounded the city. On their arrival in Bristol, the young couple worshipped at St. Philip's Church, which was just outside the castle walls over against the King's orchard, and stood on the level ground between an extensive marshy plain and a slowly-rising hill which, with its varying undulations, rose higher and higher until it reached its greatest height in the heart of the Kingswood Forest.

The young couple soon made many friends, but were chagrined to find a serious division amongst the worshippers.

Following the example of their vicar, William Yeamans, a very godly man, many of the best living families frequently met in their different homes for a more scriptural and spiritual order of service than was permitted them in the church.

These spiritually-minded people appealed very forcibly to the devout nature of the young officer's wife, and she was easily led to unite with them in their unconventional meetings for prayer and worship.

At these private devotional services there was a devout woman of singular ability who throughout her life combined and displayed the tenderest of womanly feelings with the most extraordinary force of character. This woman, then known as Widow Kelly, but afterwards as Dorothy Hazzard, became a frequent visitor at the Castle House, and as a result of her skilful defence of the unconventional services, prevailed upon the Captain to waive his objections and come to the meetings, "For the proof of the pudding is in the eating." The next meeting was at the house of William Listun, a beautiful country residence near to the Lawford's Gate, which then stood at the top of what is now called West Street.

William Listun was a man of substance and of great influence in the city. His wealth was derived from a flourishing glove-making industry, and though he possessed the Christian appellation "William," yet he was frequently spoken of as "Glover Listun." He was held in high esteem by his fellow citizens, for his indomitable courage, sound judgment and high Christian character.

Martha Listun, like her husband, was a great soul. She nobly seconded every aspiration of her husband's heart that tended to promote a fuller and more useful Christian life.

The opinions of these two on all matters of religion, were greatly respected by a large circle of friends in Bristol. Like many others, William and Martha Listun had grown weary of the superstitious practices in vogue inside the Church of England, and deplored that the church was not available for those who wished to cultivate their spiritual life in the scriptural way. In lieu of this privilege they had thrown open their home, like others, for the prayer-loving members to meet for prayer and worship.

It was at the house of William and Martha Listun that Lionel Wakefield had his introduction to the secret springs of the devout life. It was an entirely new experience for him. As he listened to the earnest prayers of these devout men and women his soul was stirred within him. He realised that they possessed something which was lacking in his own life. While he considered his own spiritual poverty the scales fell from his eyes, he saw Christ in an entirely new light, and there and then entered into a vital relationship with Him as his Lord and Saviour.

Selina's joy was indescribable. They returned to their home in the castle more completely one than when they were united at their marriage ceremony, for now they were one in Christ Jesus.

Their first act when they entered their room was to kneel down and thank God for His great mercy and to dedicate their home to the service of Christ as the Listuns had dedicated theirs.

The personnel of that memorable meeting would make an interesting study, but as many of those present will come into this story we do not need to dilate upon them here; let it suffice to say that their minister, William Yeamans, presided; he prayed and expounded

the doctrine of justification by faith, and testified from his own experience to the consequent peace that comes into the soul of the believer.

Not long after this meeting, the home-call came to this much-loved minister. It was a great loss and sorrow to the little group of spiritually minded men and women. For ministers of Mr. Yeamans' devout spirit were rare and very difficult to obtain in those days. During the period they were without a minister, an old controversy was revived concerning the wisdom, or otherwise, of seceding from the Established Church, and forming a society free from State control and the ritualistic accretions of the bygone centuries. But as before, no agreement could be arrived at, because their love for the Church made them shrink from doing anything that would injure, as they thought, the sacred body of Christ. The evils within the Church were visible to them all, but secession would not eradicate them. These evils must be assailed from within.

Dorothy Kelly strongly contended for separation; so did several others. But Lionel was emphatically opposed to such a step; so were William and Martha Listun, because of the harm it might do in dividing the flock of Christ in the presence of the devouring wolves of worldliness. Selina's sympathies went in the direction of Dorothy Kelly's views. In consequence of this division the little group continued as before. The majority was fearful of taking any step that would bring religion into disrepute.

The coming of a little child into the home of Lionel and Selina was the occasion of great joy to the parents and all their immediate acquaintances. This baby girl was named Grace, to remind the parents of the grace that had blest them in their early wedded life.

The ceremony of christening the child and churching the mother in the parish church was so elaborate and pagan that Lionel marvelled at the whole performance, but as a loyal churchman he could not demur, and therefore quietly acquiesced.

Having no children of her own, the great mother-heart of Dorothy Kelly went out towards the infant child of her two friends, and her love for Grace was second only to the love of the child's parents.

At one of her visits to the Castle House she discussed the forthcoming Christmas High Festival in the church, and expressed her determination to call attention to its superstitious character by abstaining from church on that day, and keeping open her shop in the High Street.

"It is not to make a few coins by trading on that day, that I will open shop," she said, "for I would rather give than receive when I think of the gift of Bethlehem. It is not to encourage lawlessness in the people. It is not that I do not respect the anniversary of our Saviour's birth, but I want to rid the church of its useless and foolish ritual."

Lionel was impressed, but strongly opposed to so sensational a departure from the conventions of the day. But Dorothy Kelly was not to be dissuaded, so on the festival day she opened her shop, and sat inside sewing. The citizens were amazed; the parsons were shocked. Crowds gathered round and jeered, and some, knowing the resentment of the parsons at such an **innovation**, would have snatched the needlework from **her hands**, and forced her to close her shop, but like a **queen** upon her throne she sat in sight of the passers-by all through the hours of that High Festival, her kindly commanding countenance and ready wit, which made

every jeering epithet to rebound upon the aggressors to their own confusion, won through. She remained undisturbed and unperturbed until all the ecclesiastical functions were over, when she closed the shop, and spent the evening with kindred minds in prayer and spiritual fellowship.

Dorothy was much beloved by the Puritans in the city for her sterling character, and they hailed her marriage, about this time, to Joseph Hazzard, Vicar of St. Ewen's, with unfeigned delight, because he was a most godly man, who omitted whatever he could of a superstitious character from the church services.

After that, prospective mothers living in other parishes of the city would obtain rooms in the St. Ewen's parish, so as to secure for themselves and infants the simple christening and churching service of the St. Ewen's church. This was highly gratifying to Martha and Selina, who availed themselves of this privilege.

These two families became very intimately associated. Lionel discovered that there was much in common between him and William Listun. As his official duties at the Castle necessitated occasional visits to London, and business called the glover there every few months, it frequently transpired that they were able to ride to and fro together.

The home life in each family was very happy. The children grew up to be a joy to their parents' hearts. In time four happy children frolicked in the Listun nursery : Kathleen, Maurice, Gerald and Margaret. And four merry hearts bubbled over with fun on the Castle green : Grace, Harry, Thomas, Muriel. And when they were able to romp together there were not

eight merrier children anywhere between Land's End and John o' Groats.

The years moved quietly onwards and the devotional meetings in the homes of these Puritans became the solid foundations of the noble superstructure they and their children afterwards erected in the ancient city of Bristol.

CHAPTER II

THE RAID

" Hope like the gleaming taper's light,
Adorns and cheers the way,
And still as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter day."

—*Goldsmith.*

THE private meetings in the homes of the Puritans provoked the bitter antagonism of their neighbours. The Puritans were criticised for regarding themselves, as it was foolishly thought, as superior beings. The leaders were marked down as fit subjects for censure, jest and derisive opprobrium.

With the beginning of 1640, Dorothy Hazzard had persuaded herself that reform inside the Church was impossible, and that it was no sin to come out from the unclean thing, as she regarded the Church in its present condition, and live in a separate religious community. But she endured much mental conflict before she took the decisive step.

It was while she was thus mentally exercised she prepared herself to go to church as usual one Sunday morning. She was on the point of leaving the house, when she turned back into her room and opened the Bible at the fourteenth chapter of the Revelation of St. John and read about the wrath of God which comes upon those who worship the beast and his image. That

was decisive. Her growing conviction was confirmed by that message from the Word of God. "Never again will I go to hear Common Prayer read," she cried. "In other ways and in other places will I worship God."

On that Sabbath morning her conflict ended in a complete severance from the Church of England; she took her stand bravely and definitely. Four men, Goodman Atkins, Goodman Pole, Richard Moon, and Mr. Bacon, a young minister, resolved to stand with her, and on that day the first Free Church in Bristol was formed. It was a small beginning. The five members had no building and no equipment for a church edifice. They had nothing but their simple faith in God.

Dorothy Hazzard threw open her own house in Broad Street, and there the first separatists assembled for worship. When the surprise of separation had worn off, and the timid and doubtful saw that no real crime had been committed against the Church, and that the seceders were happy in the fuller freedom of their religious life, they threw in their lot with them, so that in a couple of years the number had grown to one hundred and fifty men and women, "whose hearts the Lord had touched."

The rapid growth of the Free Church alarmed the City Fathers, and drunken sailors in the port were engaged to break up the meeting and wreck Dorothy Hazzard's house.

A desperate struggle ensued between the drunken sailors and the members of the young Church. It was soon seen to be hopeless to try and save the house from becoming a wreck. Their principal concern was to protect the more helpless of their number, especially

the women and girls that were among them. A determined effort was made to carry off some of the girls to the sailors' drinking quarters in the Pithay. One powerful young sailor seized Selina's maid, Goodman Atkins' daughter, and made off with her, the poor terrified maiden struggling and screaming for help.

Dorothy Hazzard was roused to fury by this monstrous attack upon the women of the meeting, and seizing the leg of a broken chair she darted forth, a veritable Amazon, to save the screaming girl from her drunken captor; but in the darkness and confusion she was frustrated by other sailors searching for loot. Confronting these men with invincible courage and determination, she made good use of her tongue in describing their knavish tricks; but more effective use of the chair leg in her hand. For more than one drunken lout had cause to remember for many days afterwards the shower of blows that drove them helter-skelter from the presence of one righteously indignant woman. All who were able, struggled bravely to protect the weak and delicate amongst them, but the attack was so sudden and the confusion so great by reason of the extinguished lights, that they were greatly handicapped.

William Listun's first thought was to protect his delicate wife and Selina, whom he had persuaded that evening to accompany Martha; but in the scuffle Selina was wrested from his arm and disappeared. Goodman Pole and Richard Moon and Goodman Atkins made tremendous efforts to get the women away to Glover Listun's house through the gardens which were adjacent at the back. They had accounted for all the women except Selina and Selina's maid and Dorothy Hazzard. When they returned and looked for these, they saw

Dorothy starting off like a whirlwind to rescue Elizabeth Atkins, whose screams could be heard in the distance ; they too joined in the pursuit.

Goodman Atkins was almost frantic when he realised that it was his own daughter Bess who had been kidnapped. Though now past the prime of life, and somewhat troubled with rheumatism, he rushed off with the other rescuers to save his child, when he was struck to the earth by a cowardly ruffian hiding in a doorway. Dorothy, in the meantime, ignorant of this brutal attack, rushed on to overtake the sailor before he could reach his hiding place in the Pithay. She had reached the top of Broad Street when the sailor was but a few yards away from the Pithay Alley for which he was making, and where, if he could reach his lodgings, he would be very secure and difficult to find.

Dorothy almost fainted as she thought of all the evil possibilities if the poor girl could not be rescued in time. Involuntarily she prayed for help to overtake the villain before he disappeared down the alley. She made a last frantic effort to catch him, when her feet stumbled on the rough, uneven road, and she fell with a thud to the ground. Her eyes saw stars as she struck the ground, and then became dark as she lay unconscious in the roadway.

The noise of the wreckers was heard all over the city, and Captain Wakefield, informed by a sentinel at the Castle, rushed along Wine Street, to save his wife from molestation, when luckily he encountered the drunken sailor just about to disappear down the dark Pithay Alley with the screaming girl in his arms. A sharp tussle ensued ; the sailor floored and the girl rescued was the work of but a few moments, and the Captain was running, with the girl by his side, to reach

the house in time to save his wife and other women who might be overpowered by the raiders, when he was arrested by the unconscious form of Dorothy Hazzard lying in the roadway.

What should he do ! What could he do !

His own dear wife might be in even a worse predicament. Never in all his life did Lionel Wakefield pray more earnestly than in those few moments. One thing was certain : he could not leave Dorothy Hazzard there. He looked instinctively towards the guard house which then stood in the street, for the assistance of the civic guards who should have been on duty, but not one was visible. The building was ominously locked up and as dark as a tomb. This aroused the Captain's suspicions. Were the civic guards behind and conniving at this breach of the peace ?

He wrung his hands in momentary despair. Turning to the rescued girl, whom he then recognised as Selina's maid, he said : " Bessie, help me to raise our poor fallen friend." When they raised her head and shoulders her eyes opened and consciousness returned. " Go," murmured the half-dazed woman. " Go and look for Selina ; she may be in greater need of help than I ! "

Lionel was distracted by the rival claims upon his chivalry. He was torn with anguish concerning his wife, and he could not leave the prostrate woman in that condition with a helpless maid. What should he do ?

But just then Goodman Pole and Richard Moon came running round the corner. They had carried Goodman Atkins through the back gardens into Glover Listun's house and left him there to be tended by the rescued women, and now in hot haste were renewing the chase for the kidnapped maid. They were relieved

to find her by the Captain's side, but distressed to see Dorothy Hazzard so helpless in the roadway.

"Go, Captain, and look for Selina," whispered Dorothy. "These good men and Bessie will look after me; I shall soon be better."

"Yes, go, Captain," exclaimed the two men together. "You go, sir; we will bring Dorothy down to the glover's house."

With that Lionel hastened to the wrecked house in search of Selina. His heart was in his mouth. Where and how would he find her?

All was dark and in ruins. He worked his way through the wreckage of the rooms, and as he drew near to the back, he heard groans from someone in pain. Was it Selina? His heart almost stopped its beating.

He quickened his steps. In the back yard was a group of men and women standing round some wounded man lying on the ground, and kneeling beside him was a woman rendering first aid to the sufferer. The wounded man was Job Bacon, the young minister who had been conducting the service that evening, and the kneeling woman was Selina Wakefield.

When Selina was torn away from Glover Listun's arm by the ruffians, Job Bacon made for her assailants. With an improvised truncheon he drove them off with some stinging blows they would never forget. But one fellow, maddened with the unexpected reception, rushed at him and flung him violently against the wall, stunning him, so that he fell helpless to the ground.

After he had led his own wife safely indoors, William Listun returned to look for Selina, when he witnessed the dastardly treatment of the young minister, and saw the ruffians rush from the building. He and others

gathered around the wounded minister, while Selina, in no way injured by her assailants, did the work of the Good Samaritan.

Lionel was immensely relieved when he found that Selina had received no hurt, and was full of gratitude to the young minister for his courage in defending her. Very tenderly they raised the wounded man and took him into Mr. Listun's house, where he soon recovered consciousness and strength to return to his home.

Goodman Atkins fogot his brutal assailant in the joy that his daughter Bess was safe. Dorothy Hazzard, when she was led into the house, made light of her fall and declared that she was in no way hurt. "It has been a rough experience for us all, but God will overrule it for our good. Don't lose courage, friends, nor be downhearted; God will frustrate the ways of evil men."

"Yes," said William Listun, "and I will go and see the Mayor, and ascertain what redress he will make for this breach of the peace and loss of property."

"And I will go with you," said Lionel.

They had not far to go, for the Mayor's house was in Corn Street.

The Mayor was at home, and pretended to be surprised and ignorant of the whole affair, showing much impatience in listening to their complaints. He then charged them with breaking the peace themselves, and threatened to throw all the Puritans into prison if they did not give up their puritanical practices and go to church like other well-behaved citizens.

"Are you conniving at this disturbance?" boldly exclaimed Captain Wakefield. "Why is the guard house locked up and the civic guard not at their post of duty? Is it a fact that you have conspired with the

ecclesiastical authorities to disturb this meeting, by hiring drunken sailors, in the port, and at the same time calling off the civic guards from their posts of duty? "

The Mayor was furious at this bold counter-stroke of turning the tables upon himself. He threatened to throw them both then and there into prison. But the Captain's authority was not inferior to his own, and realising that discretion was the better part of valour, he expressed regret at the inconvenience they and their friends had been put to, and then, politely conducting them to the door, wished them both " Good-night."

They returned and reported the interview to the members who were still at the glover's house.

Foreseeing there would be no redress and that other disturbances might follow, they drew up a petition to the Parliament which was then sitting, and commissioned William Listun, as their Member of Parliament, to present it as speedily as possible. Having done this, they went in groups to their different homes.

A few days after the raid William Listun presented the petition to Parliament. It was very sympathetically received. The House denounced the raid as an outrage upon the liberties of peace-loving citizens, and passed a resolution severely censuring the Mayor for appearing to connive at such an injustice, and insisting on impartial treatment in administering the law.

The resolution was to be forwarded by a special messenger.

Very anxiously was the return of William Listun awaited. The Puritans feared reprisals for this appeal to Parliament; but so effective was the appeal that, when he returned, a sergeant was sent to invite him to the Mayor's house. The Mayor was full of oily blandishment which barely concealed his chagrin for

the sharp rebuke he had received from William Pym, the great Parliamentary leader.

“William Listun, I am, as you must well know, always favourably disposed towards good causes. Had I known you were going to London with your complaint, I would have saved you all the trouble, by complying with your wishes. Come, let us be friends and good neighbours. Stay and dine with me and the Mayoress.”

William Listun, in his usual courtly manner, thanked the Mayor for his proffered friendship, and begged to be excused from staying to dinner, as family and business affairs claimed his immediate attention.

This was the Puritans' first victory in Bristol. After this rough experience the Puritan church met at the Dolphin Inn, in Dolphin Street, and were made welcome by its very genial landlord.

CHAPTER III

A BELEAGUERED CITY

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good,
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

—*Tennyson.*

THE cloud of civil war which had been hanging threateningly above the nation for some time, burst upon the citizens of Bristol with lightning rapidity. Before that storm all religious differences were obliterated. The burning questions were political, not religious.

"Are you a Royalist?"

"Are you a Parliamentary?"

Behind those labels the citizens marshalled themselves in opposite camps. The majority held with the Parliament and prepared to defend the city against the King, Charles the First.

The little Free Church took its stand with the Parliamentary Party, because it opposed tyranny and championed civil and religious freedom.

As there was a shortage of men to garrison the city, Dorothy Hazzard and her band of praying women were commissioned to defend the From Gate, which was then the principal entrance into the city from the west.

Very nobly did these devout women address themselves to their formidable task.

Having committed themselves to God and sought His guidance and protection, they brought not only

zeal, but amazing resourcefulness into the service. They cut and gathered huge logs of timber from the trees outside the city, and skilfully fixed them between the uplifted drawbridge, and the heavy closed gates, so as to check the cannon balls from striking them, while on the inside of the gates they piled up a huge barricade of wool sacks, earth and timber.

For weapons, should the attackers come right up to the gates, they liberally supplied themselves with stones taken from the bed of the River Froom.

So swift, however, was the advance of Prince Rupert and his army of twenty thousand men, that the outer wall of defence was not finished when the Royalists came up in full force. Rupert was quick to detect the gap in the wall at the top of the hill now known as Park Street, and concentrating his army at that point, he rushed through, notwithstanding the stubborn resistance of the defenders, and came down to assail the inner defences of the city. Fierce house-to-house encounters took place in the old Steep Street, in which both sides lost heavily.

The Froom Gate was Prince Rupert's next objective. From hidden positions he trained his guns on the defence work of the "Praying Women." Ball after ball came thundering at the gate, but they could not penetrate the carefully packed logs on the outer side.

From the ramparts Dorothy watched the movements of the enemy, and directed the movements of the women under her command. She proved herself a general of consummate ability in foiling the enemy. After hours of fruitless hammering they lost their hope of getting in at the Froom Gate, and moved round to find some weak spot elsewhere in the city's defences. The women had succeeded gloriously in their military undertaking.

But notwithstanding this spirited effort of the women, in the end the city made a very cowardly surrender to the Prince. Some of the principal merchants were afraid they would lose their property if the Prince took the city by force of arms. And these selfish faint-hearts prevailed upon the equally faint-hearted governor of the garrison to capitulate to the Prince on terms favourable to themselves. The Prince was ready to concede any condition so that he might get possession of such a strongly fortified city.

"The capture of Bristol," he said to his generals, "will be equal to the addition of another army, and it will so utterly demoralise the rebels that they will not be able to stand anywhere against us. Then," with a wink and a chuckle, "we shall soon see the collapse of the rebel army everywhere and the re-establishment of the King's authority throughout his kingdom."

When all the formalities of surrender were concluded, the Prince inspected the gates and defence works of the city. When he came to the Froom Gate he was amazed at the strength of the fortifications there. "No wonder," he exclaimed, "our cannon could make no impression here, and to think it is all the work of women. Where are they? I would like to see such sturdy defenders of whom any city might well be proud."

Dorothy and her "Praying Women" then drew near to receive the royal congratulation on their brave stand. Taking Dorothy by the hand, the Prince said, "You and your women are stout-hearted patriots. If the men of Bristol had put up as determined a fight as you have done, I could never have got into your city. May you henceforth be as loyal to my uncle, your King, as you have been to these rebels, and I can promise you all a goodly measure of royal favour."

“ Prince Rupert, my women and I are not ungrateful for your praise and promised favour,” stiffly replied Dorothy, “ but we seek not the praise and favour of princes. One is our King and Lord, and all who fear Him and deal honourably with their fellow creatures have our prayers and respect. But they who disregard God and act treacherously toward their fellows, we despise, and will never follow, though they be kings and princes.”

The governor of the garrison, fearing the consequences of further speech by Dorothy, diverted the attention of the Prince from the fearless outspoken woman, to important matters concerning the interests of the merchants who had urged the surrender of the city.

The fall of Bristol, the second city of the kingdom, was a crushing blow to the Parliamentary Party. The news was “ like a sentence of death ” to all their hopes in the West. But the effect was just the reverse of the King’s expectations.

Parliament became more resolute than ever to strike for freedom. The King must be cornered at whatever cost, his army put out of action, and Bristol regained for the cause of freedom.

During the time Bristol was besieged Captain Wakefield remained in residence at the Castle House. Being an ardent Royalist he was deprived of all his authority by Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes, the Parliamentary Governor of the garrison, and put under close surveillance, lest by any sign, word or act, he should communicate with the enemy outside. But with the fall of the city the Captain regained his former position in the Castle.

As the Governor of the Castle he was called upon to do the honours to the Prince and his officers during

their stay in the city. This honour proved very disastrous to his loyalty. Royalty at a distance had always been to him a glorious example of honourable as well as exalted human nature. But when he saw the unchecked revelling of Rupert's officers under his own roof, he was sadly disillusioned. His belief in an immaculate Prince and the divine right of kings was terribly shaken.

Prince Rupert appeared to Lionel to be one with his coarse gallants, whose speech and conduct were execrable to a degree. They gloried in being called "Gallant gentlemen," but none deserved the designation less. Their march across the country left a train of distressed women whom their pseudo-gallantry had wickedly deceived.

"What care I for virtue?" exclaimed one of the gallants when Dorothy Hazzard indignantly rebuked him for his coarse familiarities with the virtuous women under her command. "Your women should feel themselves honoured to receive the attentions of their Prince and his immediate friends."

"My women will feel it a greater honour to be left unmolested," scornfully replied Dorothy.

It was with difficulty that Lionel restrained himself from thrusting this officer from the Castle House. His language, in the presence of Selina, was so objectionable as to make Lionel's blood boil with indignation. Feeling the Prince was at fault for allowing such liberties, he turned to that august personage and boldly said :

"Your Highness must excuse the plain words of an honest Royalist. I have stood loyally by the cause of the King in a city full of his enemies. I have offered you the heartiest hospitality of this castle home, and as a Prince and the distinguished nephew of an august

King, I expected you so to command your officers that none would dare to be familiar in your presence and in the presence of virtuous women. This officer's conduct has been so objectionable that if you had not been present I would have pitched him headlong from my door. I beg your Royal Highness to exercise more command over your officers, lest I may lose all sense of self-control, and do that which any Christian Royalist would shrink from doing in the presence of an honourable Prince."

The face of the officer in question went almost scarlet while Lionel was speaking. He had never been so fearlessly spoken of before. Quickly his hand went to the hilt of his sword, and for a moment it looked as if he would thrust its polished blade through the body of the Governor. But the Prince interposed, commanding him to draw back his hand and apologise.

Constrained by this royal command, and fearing to disobey, he suavely said to the Governor: "I beg your pardon, sir, and," turning to Selina, "I beg your pardon, gracious madam. I admit my gallantry got the better of my judgment."

After this, the Prince, feeling that the Castle, under the Christian Governor, would prove too straight a place for his gallant officers, terminated the incident by saying:

"I thank you for your lavish hospitality, Governor and Madam Wakefield, but lest our debonair ways may again offend you, I will command our departure from the city in the morning, when full guarantees are given me for the city's future loyalty to the King."

This announcement was received with great approval by the cavaliers, and also by Lionel and Selina, though for very opposite reasons.

CHAPTER IV

THE KING LOSES A VALIANT OFFICER

"The star of the unconquered will
O fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long—
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong."

—Longfellow.

LONG before his men were astir, the next morning, the Prince was up and about. News of his early rising was quickly circulated, and very soon his officers were with him, showing unmistakable signs of a hurried toilet. Anxiety to press on with the campaign in Devon and Dorset was the Prince's excuse for such a hasty departure from Bristol.

"The army," said he, "must be ready to march before noon. A contingent must remain to garrison the city for the King. This contingent, with all its officers, I place under the command of Governor Lionel Wakefield."

Then turning to Lionel, the Prince said, "I have the fullest confidence in you, Governor Wakefield. You are too loyal a Royalist to let these Roundheads wrest the city again from its allegiance to its lawful King. The regiments of horse and foot I leave with you, will enable you to carry out our royal will, and protect the city from bands of prowling Roundheads who may be vain enough to attempt its subjection. You are an honest officer; your integrity is a great asset to the King's army. In your hands friends and foes will learn that their highest interests are perfectly safe, and that

your administration will be marked by the utmost impartiality. For this important task, to which I appoint you, I raise you to the rank of Colonel in the King's army."

Lionel acknowledged the compliments and accepted the appointment as an opportunity of alleviating the sorrows and burdens of the citizens in that critical hour.

Before the Prince departed, Lionel was given a despatch concerning the surrender of the city, and his appointment as Colonel over the garrison, and was commanded to deliver it in person to the King, who was then at Oxford, as soon as he had made arrangement for the safety of the city during his absence.

Having completed all the necessary formalities, the Prince left the city amidst tremendous cheering by his own lewd soldiers, but there was very little cheering amongst the citizens he was leaving behind. The enthusiasm of the Royalists, which was so wildly demonstrative when he entered the city, was now conspicuously absent. Their idol Prince had broken his solemn promise to respect their property, and was marching off with one hundred thousand pounds' worth of treasure which he had confiscated. They could not forgive him, and never did, and when at a later crisis he sorely needed their support, they gave their allegiance to another and better general.

The Colonel's first duty was to provide an escort for a company of Free Churchmen from Wales who had taken refuge in the city from the ill-treatment of the Royalist soldiers, but now that the city had fallen into the hands of the Royalists, they wished to leave for London. When discussing the terms of surrender with the City Fathers, the position of these Welshmen and other Puritans was considered, and the Prince pledged

himself to give them a safe escort for twenty miles through the districts occupied by his soldiers.

When the escort was ready to start, Colonel Wakefield commanded the officer-in-charge to give the Free Churchmen every kindly consideration on the way, because several of their number were aged and infirm. Then wishing the Free Churchmen an easy journey, and a safe arrival amongst their friends in London, he proceeded to carry out the other commands of the Prince.

He inspected the troops put under his command, both at the inner and outer fortifications. He spoke kindly words to officers and men, telling them that he would trust them to be brave and true while defending the city, and to give every consideration to those who differed from them in politics and religion.

"The city is like a big family just now, we are dependent upon one another for the necessities of life. So let us be like brothers and sisters in a family and scrupulously respect each other's life and honour and religious beliefs."

This speech drew him to the heart of the garrison, they had never been so addressed by any officer before. They saw in their Colonel a kindly brotherly soul, whom they could honour, respect and follow. And they all in their hearts resolved to be better men, and loyal to his commands.

The next day Lionel was free to ride over to Oxford with the despatches of Prince Rupert. Wishing Selina and the children good-bye, he promised to return as speedily as possible, both for their sakes and that of the garrison.

He provided himself with a fine horse and set off in high hopes of being cordially received by His Majesty,

to whom he was taking such good and important news. Life never seemed so bright and rosy to Lionel as on this morning when he set out to visit the King for whom he had the highest regard, and whom he believed to be a good and worthy monarch.

As he proceeded on his way his hero-worship took more and more possession of his mind as almost to obliterate the landscape before him. Charles rose higher and higher before his eyes, as a great soul, an immaculate king, an impartial monarch, an unerring judge, a self-effacing ruler, ruling the nation in the fear of God, and for the glory of God. And though so many of his dearest friends were on the side of the Parliament and opposed to the King, he could not help thinking they were wrong, and that if they knew their monarch better they would cease to oppose him, and would give him their heartiest allegiance.

Suddenly he was brought to earth by his horse stumbling over an object lying in the road. The jerk banished the King from his mind, for there in the roadway was a motionless figure either unconscious or dead. He looked around and was horrified to see the road littered with garments, and further on other human beings lying prone on the green roadside. What could it mean?

Regardless of any personal risk, he dismounted and tethered his horse to a stump of a tree. Then he examined the body in the road to ascertain whether it was dead or alive. Raising the head gently, the eyes opened, and Lionel recognised in the prostrate man, Goodman Atkins, whom, with his friends, he had sent towards London under the armed escort of the King's soldiers.

“What is the meaning of your serious condition, Goodman Atkins; can you tell me?” kindly enquired Lionel. “Where are your friends and the escort I sent to protect you?”

“My friends are scattered I know not where,” whispered the wounded man with great effort. Just then Pastor Craddock was seen limping along the road towards them, carrying food and a tankard of milk he had obtained from a neighbouring farm. This he distributed amongst his prostrate followers. From him Lionel heard the full story of their experiences after leaving Bristol.

“The officers and soldiers were villains without any mercy for age or infirmity. When we reached the wildest part of the Wiltshire Downs, they set to and stripped us, robbing us one by one. Our horses were taken from us and let loose, and the harness was so badly hacked about as to be entirely useless.

“I have been searching for the members of my party and have not yet found them all. Some of our number resisted the inhuman treatment of the soldiers and fought their assailants vigorously, but I fear they got the worst of it, for what are naked hands against swords?”

“Goodman Pole and Richard Moon and our friend here, Goodman Atkins, who expressed a wish to join my company, were great in defending us against the treachery of the escort; they put up a brave fight, but in the end were beaten down, all three being seriously wounded.

“It appears that a young Bristol sailor, who had joined the Prince’s army, was in the escort, and was the first to instigate the attack upon us. We had not got very far from Bristol when he began to speak very objectionably about the Puritans and the trouble they

were said to have brought to Bristol by their 'ranting ways.'

" 'So violent and noisy were their meetings,' he said, 'that once when our ship was in port, my mates and I were called upon by the Mayor and respectable citizens to go and turn them out and shut up their row. This of course we did, but had to suffer for it. My word, they fought like cats and dogs. Some of my companions will carry their scars to the grave. One great hulking fellow gave me a stunning blow in the jaw, while I was tenderly carrying a young terrified woman from the noisy den, which made me drop her, and sent me reeling to the ground. Some day I will pay back that blow with interest. If I had my way I would stamp the whole lot out of existence as I would a pestilence. And now to think that we, the soldiers of a great and victorious King, are escorting such worthless rebels on the King's highway astounds me. Let us drop them, and get about the King's business.'

" 'This highly inflammatory speech was like a spark in a powder magazine : in a moment the whole escort became affected, and when we reached this lonely spot, they set to, and maltreated us, as you observe.'

The minister was some time telling this distressing story, for like his followers, he had suffered bodily injury and was in great pain.

Finding that he had given all the food and milk to his friends without partaking of any himself, Lionel took some from his saddle-bags and urged the exhausted minister to break his fast and conserve his strength for the sake of others. Yielding to this sensible advice, he soon felt refreshed, and set out with Lionel to find the rest of the party.

In various positions along the road they found them. All had been shamefully ill-treated. Moon and Richards, like Atkins, were badly wounded. These were very skilfully tended by Lionel, who in his younger days had acquired considerable medical knowledge.

As Colonel in the King's army he commandeered food and fresh saddles from the neighbouring stables, and once more set the Puritans on their way, accompanying them as far as the cross-roads, when they were overtaken by a large contingent of Roundheads. The presence of Lionel in the full uniform of a Royalist officer put the whole party under suspicion, and they were told by the officer in command of the Roundheads to regard themselves as prisoners of war.

Lionel saw that escape was impossible. He would have dashed off if there had been the remotest chance, for he feared for the safety of the despatches he was carrying to the King. But he was surrounded by men whose horses were as fleet as his own. While he was considering how to save the despatches from falling into the enemy's hands, Pastor Craddock begged permission to interview the commanding officer. This was granted, and to him the minister showed the credentials of the party Lionel had given them on leaving Bristol, and then related the story of the treachery of the Royalist escort, and the magnanimous way Lionel had assisted them and bound up the wounds of their injured comrades.

When the commanding officer heard this, he said to his lieutenant, "These are not enemies, but friends," and going up to Lionel he said, "You are no longer a prisoner of war, Colonel Wakefield, but free to proceed with your military duty. Pastor Craddock has told me how nobly you have succoured this distressed band of Puritans."

This considerate officer, who with his "Invincible Ironsides" had achieved distinction in several sharp encounters with the Royalists, and was returning to London to receive more and higher commands, was Colonel Oliver Cromwell, destined to become the Lord High Protector of the United Kingdom.

The two officers looked steadfastly into each other's face and read in that illuminating glance the affinities of soul that should have made them companions and fellow officers in that time of national crisis.

Shaking Lionel by the hand, Colonel Cromwell continued, "I thank you, Colonel Wakefield, for your humane services to these outraged citizens. Your action is worthy of a better master than the one who possesses your allegiance. As a Royalist you have shown yourself an exception to the rule that governs Royalist soldiers passing over our distracted country. For your services to these Puritans I shall always feel indebted to you, and some day I may be able to show more fittingly than words can do now, how greatly I appreciate your Christian action."

With mutual felicitations the two men parted to continue their respective journeys, grateful for the chance of meeting each other.

Lionel was greatly agitated by the treachery of the escort. Ought he not to have been more careful in his selection of men to carry out the pledged word of Prince Rupert? Who could that ill-disposed sailor be? Was he the man from whose evil grasp he had delivered Selina's maid, Bessie? What does he mean by returning the knock-down blow with interest?

Lionel felt himself involved in strangely entangled affairs which in the hands of unscrupulous men might work to his undoing.

At any cost he resolved to stand firm for honour and duty. He could not help reviewing the misdeeds of the Prince and his followers in Bristol. And now he had another evidence of the untrustworthy character of the men in the uniform of the King.

"Surely Cromwell could not have been right in saying that this kind of thing was the rule in the King's army, and his action the exception. Surely I shall find things very different at Oxford. Surely his gracious Majesty King Charles will show himself an exemplary monarch and his royal presence will command the most honourable conduct in all those who are associated with him."

These thoughts flitted through his mind as he rode with all speed to Oxford.

The despatches were soon read by the King and passed on to his generals. At the request of the King, Lionel gave a full account of the siege and fall of the city.

"For your part in entertaining him so lavishly Prince Rupert reports that he has raised you to the rank of Colonel and given you the command of the Bristol garrison. I heartily endorse my royal nephew's choice, and wish you much success in your command.

"The despatches also refer to his pledge to the rebel citizens to send under escort towards London a contingent of religious fanatics, and that he had left the execution of that pledge to you. Have you attended to that matter, Colonel Wakefield?"

"I have, your Majesty," humbly replied Lionel. "But I regret to report that on my journey to your Majesty I overtook the party on the Wiltshire Downs in the most destitute condition, having been stripped, robbed and wounded by the escort, and left helpless and without food."

"What did you do?"

"I was very distressed to see them in this condition, and perplexed, knowing that the King's business requires haste, and yet I was persuaded that your Majesty would not wish one of your officers to be wanting in natural kindness, especially to those to whom Prince Rupert had pledged his honour to give a safe escort; for that reason I tarried, and obtained help and food for them, and brought them some distance on their way, when we met a company of Roundheads going to London under the command of Colonel Cromwell, and into that officer's charge I entrusted the party."

"What!" cried the King, flying into a passion. "Do you mean to say that you stopped to help those worthless rogues, when your duty was to come to me with all speed?"

"Yes," your Majesty, "I was led to feel that humanity's call was higher and more imperative than my duty to yourself, though I am the last officer under your command who would underestimate your prerogative or wantonly disobey orders. I bow to your royal displeasure, though it is only fair to add that I owe my liberty and the privilege of bringing these despatches to your Majesty, to those very services your Majesty is pleased to condemn."

"On the way I was arrested as a prisoner of war, and but for the report of my services the Puritans gave Colonel Cromwell, I should by now be nearing London, and the despatches in the hands of the enemy. For my services to the Puritans the Colonel released me."

"How dare you attempt to have yourself excused for your criminal delay? Your conduct is unpardonable. I have a good mind to strip you of your command as Colonel and dismiss you from my service."

What stand Lionel would have taken, and what the King would have done will never be known, for just then there burst forth such a wild shout of jubilation around the audience chamber that the King was constrained to give his attention to the noisy revellers who shouted :

“ Bristol is fallen, Bristol is fallen. The pride of the West has returned to the Royal fold. God save the King. Long live the King.”

Then ensued a period of the coarsest revelry in which the King was apparently a willing participant, and similar scenes to those which had disgusted Lionel in Bristol were freely indulged in.

Lionel was both indignant and grieved to witness such riotousness so near to the King and the chief prelates of the Church, and with no apparent sign of their disapproval. What fate was it, he thought, which blinded their eyes ?

Neither the King nor the prelates who attended him seemed to realise the aspirations of a new generation for a cleaner public life, and a fuller and freer participation in the affairs of the Church and the State.

“ The nation is in the birth-throes of a lofty and solemn purpose, but the King and the prelates—my King and the prelates of my Church—know it not.”

It was a rude awakening Lionel received at Oxford. His idol King fell before his eyes and was shattered to pieces, and his Church, the Church of which he had been so long a member, lost all its charm and power and glory through its faithless ministers.

But Lionel was not the first to feel as he did then. Behind the Parliamentary Party were men who had been as loyal to the King and to the Church as Lionel Wakefield, but had been driven, on religious and political grounds, to take their stand against both. And

now they were in grim earnest in pressing the conflict to the gates.

No vestige of feudalism in the State nor mediævalism in the Church would any longer be tolerated. There was a growing determination in the nation to cast off all the fetters of absolutism. Much sorrow and bloodshed might have been avoided had the King and his spiritual advisers been more alert to the spirit of the age. But they were blind.

Lionel was glad to leave the royal presence and return home. On the way he debated with himself his future action. Two things were now clear to him. He must sever his connection with the Church, and resign his position as Governor of the Bristol Castle and Colonel of the garrison.

Selina received the news of his decision with quiet thankfulness. If the resignation of his post in the Castle meant the loss of their beautiful home, she would willingly and gladly endure it, to support her husband in the noble stand he was taking.

Lionel's resignation as Governor and Commandant was the next day forwarded to the King, and in due course was accepted. And at the expiration of a given time he and his family were ordered to leave the Castle House.

"It is better so," said the loving wife as she placed her hands upon her husband's shoulders and kissed him fondly. "It is better so, dear. God will take care of us. Let us trust and never fear."

"You are a dear good angel, Selina. Your beautiful life makes me good. And your love makes me brave and strong."

And with these words the husband threw his arms around his brave-hearted wife, and in their mutual love they forgot their troubles.

CHAPTER V

BRISTOL LOSES ITS GREAT FORTRESS

“How far that little candle throws his beams,
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.”
—*Shakespeare.*

THINGS were not the same at the Dolphin Inn after the city had surrendered to Prince Rupert and settled down to the routine of life under the Royalist regime. John Anyside, the hitherto jovial landlord, became very icy in his attitude towards the Puritans. The city reactionaries had been given a new license, to obstruct and frustrate the Puritan meetings.

John Anyside was a true son of the inn. He was quick to detect the policy which buttered his bread the most, and quick to act accordingly. His patrons of the Church and the magisterial bench had hinted that the Dolphin must be closed to Dissenters.

Willing, as usual, to oblige the party which brought the most grist to his mill, he began to put obstructions in the way of the Puritans meeting in his dining hall.

Without attempting to enforce his contract the Puritans changed their quarters. Colonel Scroope, the former Governor of the Castle, offered them his house inside the Castle walls, and here the young Free Church met for worship.

But while Lionel attended the meetings, he felt he could not enrol himself as a member in its present unstable condition. Something more positive was wanted than a mere protest to the existing order of things in the Established Church, if the Free Church

was to last, and become a real living force in the life of the city. The new movement could only become an abiding power as it stood four-square upon solid, positive principles. What these principles were he could not say.

In his dilemma he recalled a conversation he had with Pastor Craddock on their way towards London. That ill-treated leader had spoken very eulogistically of a William Kiffin, of Welsh descent, just launching out in the woollen trade, and head of a newly-formed Baptist church in London. The name of this church indicated some positive principle with which he was unfamiliar ; he would therefore go to London and make enquiries concerning it.

This church, he found, met in a large room in William Kiffin's house. The service had just begun when Lionel entered. The room was full of men and women eager to hear their pastor's address on the constitution of a Baptist Church.

After the singing of a psalm and the reading of Scripture, the pastor led the worshippers reverently to the throne of grace in prayer. The address was based on the words : " 'The church in thy house.' "

" A church was a company of believers called out from the world.

" The New Testament church was a company of baptized believers.

" The mode of baptism was immersion.

" The New Testament church commemorated the Lord's death in a simple ritual called 'The Lord's Supper.'

" The church was a spiritual body, and Christ was its sole spiritual head.

"No priesthood was recognised save the common priesthood of all believers, which gave every one free access to Jesus Christ, and freedom to preach and pray as the spirit moveth.

"The church being a spiritual body, no earthly monarch could be its head, and no earthly monarch should appoint its ministers and control its activities.

"The church should be free to meet in its own way and all its members free to act according to the dictates of an enlightened conscience instructed by the word of God.

"Whomsoever the church chose to call from among themselves to minister to their spiritual needs, was their minister.

"None should be admitted into membership who did not profess faith in Jesus Christ as their one and only Saviour, and observe the ordinance of believers' baptism, and undertake to observe the simple ritual of the Lord's Supper.

"All the members should live good, chaste lives, communicate the word of God to others, and by the exercise of their several gifts seek to extend the Saviour's Kingdom.

"This was the New Testament church, and the Baptist church in London or elsewhere must approximate itself to that as its ideal."

No bare outline of the discourse can convey any adequate idea of the impression the preacher made upon his audience. The clear resonant voice, the strong note of conviction, and the fervid passion displayed in his closing appeal, struck conviction in every listener's heart and brought many waverers to a decision.

"Next week, God-willing," said Mr. Kiffin, "I shall conduct a baptismal service at the Thames side, and

shall be ready to baptize those believers who are convinced they should follow their Lord's example."

Many names were handed in, and among them Lionel Wakefield's. Lionel had been deeply moved as he listened to the address. The church Mr. Kiffin had portrayed was vastly different to the church of his experience. Here was a church that could stand in its own right, exercise its own authority, and work with a will to evangelise the world. Here was a church of godly men and women who made the Lordship of Jesus supreme in their lives.

Lionel was convinced he had found the true church ; and so he gave in his name that he might join it in the true scriptural way.

Mr. Kiffin received Lionel's name with immense gratification. In the name of the church he thanked him for his kindness to the maltreated Puritans on their way to London, most of whom had fully recovered from their wounds.

He soon learned how things stood in Bristol and of Lionel's expected removal from the Castle House, and was most sympathetic.

"Have no fear, Mr. Wakefield, about the ordering of your ways. God's hand is on the helm, and in yonder city of yours, if I mistake not, you will do a great work for God."

A great crowd assembled at the Thames side to witness the baptismal service. There were many candidates for the ordinance, but not the least was Lionel Wakefield, who, with grateful heart and a lowly, child-like mind, consecrated his life afresh to Christ in the ordinance of believers' baptism.

The service was interrupted several times by individuals in the crowd. Perhaps it was natural that this



"Eh, man, where is Andrew Gifford?"

"Well," drawled out the farm hand thus addressed, "he was here but a bit agone and rushed like mad through the barn doo-er."

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departure from the accepted religious customs of the day should meet with opposition. Respectability jeered, vulgarity impugned motives, while militant bigotry molested with noisy epithets and with showers of mud and stones. A sailor was noticed in the crowd to be more troublesome than all the rest in throwing stones, one of which fell within a few inches of Lionel's head as the pastor was raising him out of the water. But God protected His own and none was hurt.

Selina awaited patiently the return of her husband to Bristol. The recital of the events in London filled her cup of happiness to overflowing.

She and her husband prayed that their friends might be led to found such a church in Bristol. Lionel reported his experiences to the church in Colonel Scroope's house, and the offer of Mr. Kiffin to come and help them found a Baptist church. The offer was gladly accepted, but before Mr. Kiffin was able to come many stirring events took place in the city and in the nation.

The country was in the grip of civil war. The King, following up the victory of Prince Rupert in Bristol, scored a series of successful encounters with the Parliamentary armies at Barnstaple, Exeter, Cornwall, Scotland, and elsewhere, until the victory of Cromwell's "Ironsides" at Marston Moor turned the tide of battle in favour of the Parliamentarians.

That decisive victory over Prince Rupert disclosed to the nation a born soldier and leader. Cromwell's organizing ability and military genius constrained the nation henceforth to look to him for deliverance, and they did not look in vain.

Cromwell's invincible "Ironsides" struck terror in the hearts of the Royalists whenever they came to close quarters, and for a good reason. They were picked

men, chosen not because of their rank and position in society, but because of their character. For the most part they were Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians. In their ranks there was no swearing, blasphemy, drunkenness, impiety, or disorderly conduct. In the eyes of their proud general they were a "lovely company."

Cromwell became immensely popular amongst the soldiers. It was clearly seen that he was able and determined to lead them to victory. After Marston Moor, victory following victory crowned his engagements, until in North, South and East the King's forces were completely routed. Only in the West did the Royal Standard continue to wave with defiant pride, and Bristol with its Castle and miles of fortifications seemed the impregnable centre of Royalist resistance.

This could not be allowed to continue. The order went forth that Bristol must be retaken, and Cromwell, acting under General Fairfax, as Commander-in-Chief, was given the task of recapturing the city. With all speed Cromwell brought his "Ironsides" before its outer defences. Making his head-quarters first at Keynsham, afterwards at Hanham on the North side of the city, he held a council of war and sent a peremptory message to the Governor of the garrison demanding immediate surrender. This Governor was now none other than Prince Rupert himself.

The Prince, after his defeat at Naseby, hastened to Bristol to resume his command of the garrison. He at once increased its strength to five thousand men, and gathered in a great store of provisions and ammunition to withstand a long siege. "Bristol," he declared, "must be retained at all cost. If Bristol is lost, the royal cause is lost everywhere." It was the desperate

effort of a brave soldier who had lost faith in himself and in his men. The Prince was learning that victory does not always depend upon the strength of a fortress, but upon the morale of its defenders. Had the Prince and his men possessed the moral stamina of Cromwell's Ironsides, his position would have been impregnable. As it was he funk'd another encounter with the victorious general.

Meeting Lionel one day as he was passing through the Castle gates, the Prince stopped and said : " Wakefield, I wish my men were like yonder Ironsides besieging the city, then I could fight with confidence of success. But alas, they are broken reeds, and I shall be broken with them."

" Your Highness has fought valiantly," replied Lionel. " But he who brings stubble to the altar is no more blest by God than was Cain of long ago. If your Highness will permit me to say so, your cause is hopeless because your men are hopeless. Any attempt to hold out against an army like Cromwell's which now encircles the city, is certain to reduce the city to ruin and will entail an appalling loss of life. Cromwell has summoned you to surrender ; why not parley with him for the most favourable terms of surrender ? Cromwell is a Christian general, not only in the treatment of his own men, but also to a fallen foe."

" Wakefield," said the Prince scornfully, " I have reason to believe you are a good man, but your counsel is bitter medicine for a proud Prince to swallow. Yet I have half a mind to take it, though my purblind officers are fuming for resistance to the death, and in the last throw to fire the city."

" Madness, your Highness. That is madness. You must save your Royal name from the stigma of such

folly and wanton loss of life. Already fires have broken out in different parts of the city ; these must be quenched forthwith, or else, instead of Cromwell's mercy, you will justly arouse his ire, and you and your whole garrison must perish."

" Wakefield, your counsel humbles me, and yet I fear there is no alternative."

" Then may I urge your Highness to act, and to act at once ? "

" Not yet, Wakefield. Not yet." And the Prince passed on his way with bowed head and a sadly troubled countenance.

While the Prince delayed his decision Cromwell smashed through the outer defences of the city, and placed his cannon over against the Castle. Then it was the Prince acted upon Lionel's counsel, and called for a parley and surrendered the city on terms favourable to himself and his men. His officers were mortified at this " cowardly surrender " as they called it, and the King was so incensed when he heard about it that he dismissed the Prince from his service, and ordered him to quit the kingdom. But to his dying day, the one thought that relieved the gloom of the fallen Prince was that he had followed the counsel of a good man and refrained from shedding needlessly human blood.

Throughout the Royalist occupation Dorothy Hazzard and the members of the Free Church remained loyal to the Parliamentary Party. In consequence they suffered much abuse and ill-treatment. But they were not deterred. They were now in high glee when they heard that Cromwell was outside the city, demanding its surrender.

Lionel's term of office as Governor of the Castle had expired, though as yet he had not left the Castle House.

He was therefore free to advise the citizens, as he had advised the Prince, not to attempt any defence of the city by force of arms, for he was certain it would be a futile effort. Cromwell's army was invincible because of the excellent character and aspirations of its constituent officers and men.

Such was the esteem with which Lionel was held in the city, both by Royalist soldiers whom he had formerly commanded, and by the civilian Royalists because of his resignation of two lucrative posts he could not conscientiously hold, that his counsel was almost unanimously approved.

The Free Church supported him with rapturous enthusiasm, for the members saw in the surrender the utter collapse of the Royalist cause, and the dawn of a new and brighter England. So it came to pass that the city surrendered without making any real effort to defend itself.

Such was the confidence of the citizens that Lionel was entrusted with the task of interviewing Cromwell and arranging the time and method of his entrance into the city. This took place at the same time the Prince was convoyed out of the city by two regiments of Horse, according to the Articles of Agreement.

The entrance of Cromwell and his Ironsides was a great day for Lionel and all his friends of the Free Church. A breach was made in the outer defence works on the old London road and the citizens went out to escort Cromwell and his Invincibles into the city.

At the head of the procession walked Dorothy Hazzard followed by her company of praying women, who three years before had so bravely defended the Froom Gate against Prince Rupert.

Cromwell and Lionel rode side by side deep in conversation with each other.

The cavalcade made an imposing spectacle as it lined down the long narrow highway, overhung with tall stately elms, gnarled oaks, graceful pines, and stout boled beeches which then fringed the road to Lawford's Gate, reminding the citizens of the vastness of the Kingswood Forest, which had been recently sold to them by the penurious King.

To a casual observer, Cromwell was a king among men, though his kingliness was not so much in his physical form, as in his religious character; not in his commanding speech, as in his incomparable deeds.

Cromwell was an intensely religious man. His Bible was his text-book for his military campaigns, and his prayers were the ammunition with which he faced his foes. His trust was in God. He entered the battlefield praying, and he came from it triumphantly saying: "The Lord did it, the Lord did it." Such was the kingliness of his nature that he drew the best men in the nation to himself, and so enthused them with his own invincible spirit that they were named "Cromwell's Invincible Ironsides."

This was the man Lionel was conversing with as they rode along the sylvan way. It is just three years since they met as officers in opposing armies. Cromwell had never forgotten the kindness of the Royalist officer to the robbed and wounded Puritans. He was not surprised to hear that he had resigned his commission as colonel, and renounced the Royalist cause. He was not surprised to find that he was held in such high esteem in Bristol as to be made the medium of communication between himself and the beleaguered city. He recognised then in Lionel, as he did three years before, a

man of irreproachable honour, intrepid courage, and deep human sympathies. The two men gripped each other's hand firmly when they met, and Cromwell said :

" I am delighted to meet you again, Colonel Wakefield. I welcome you as a great accession to the cause of liberty and justice and national righteousness. My pleasure on this occasion is enhanced by having you at my side as we enter the city."

Lionel was equally gratified to meet again the worthy General, and so it transpired as they rode together, they were on the happiest terms with each other, and exchanged thoughts and ideas with the freedom of old and dear friends.

The cavalcade halted at the Lawford's Gate while certain formalities were attended to by the guards, who were responsible for the security of the gate. And while standing there Cromwell caught his first glimpse of the city and its frowning Castle, at the foot of the broad incline known as Old Market Street. Adjacent to the Lawford's Gate, the country residence of William Listun, standing in the midst of its extensive and beautiful garden, drew the attention of Cromwell, who remarked to Lionel :

" What a charming house and garden."

" Yes," said Lionel. " And they who live there are as charming as the place itself. William and Martha Listun are staunch supporters of the Parliamentary cause, and are in the company leading the procession. Those are their four children standing there with my four, and looking so keenly at us over the fence, and waving their flags in welcome."

Cromwell graciously saluted the little ones as he passed along, and in doing so won the never-dying admiration of eight young great-hearts.

When the cavalcade reached the bottom of the Old Market, the drawbridge over the moat was lowered, and the Castle gates were opened to the victors, who marched through, and wending their way by the towers of the outer ward and the great Don John tower in the inner ward, finally emerged through the gate on the south side of the Castle and over the dry moat which separated the Castle from the city, and there, near St. Peter's Church and in the heart of Bristol, Cromwell halted, and in the name of the Parliament accepted the surrender of the Castle and the city.

Then directing the attention of the Mayor and the City Fathers to the great and mighty fortress, the second fortress in the kingdom, Cromwell said :

“ This fortress has long been a menace to the best interests of the English Commonwealth. It has harboured again and again reactionary adventurers who have defied and resisted the wishes of the people for a better and more Christian government. For the last three years it has housed the Royalist garrison left in charge by Prince Rupert, to whom the city made a very cowardly surrender. I understand that things of unspeakable shame have been witnessed during this period of Royalist occupation. That such scenes shall never again have this impregnable cover, I command in the name of the Parliamentary Government that this mighty fortress shall be razed to the ground, and I command this most Christian officer, Governor Lionel Wakefield, an excellent man as you all know, who for conscientious reasons resigned his position as Colonel of the garrison and Governor of the Castle,—I command him to serve the Parliament as Chief Commissioner in the demolition of the Castle, and to remain a resident amongst you in the old Castle House.

“And now, citizens, to your homes. And may the God of all grace bring out of these evil times order, peace and prosperity.”

Thus ended one of the most memorable chapters in Bristol history.

After a few words of instruction to his officers, General Cromwell retired with Lionel to the Castle House, where he enjoyed the homely hospitality of his host and hostess until the following morning.

In the afternoon the four children of Lionel and Selina came home, with their four companions. They were all full of excitement because they had seen the great General, and had been smilingly recognised by him. They rushed into the house in great glee to tell their mother all about it, when the unexpected presence of Cromwell brought them to a sudden standstill, and silenced the words of eulogy that were leaping to their lips.

“My dears,” said the loving mother, when she saw their embarrassment. “The visit of General Cromwell is as great a surprise to your father and me as it is to you; but you and your four companions will welcome him as gladly as we do, for he is our great deliverer and friend, and has told us we are not to leave the Castle House.”

And with that the boys drew themselves up to their full height and gave the General a military salute, and the girls curtsied in the most graceful manner.

The General was deeply impressed with their conduct, their bright, intelligent countenances, and their spontaneous response to their youthful sense of duty. He complimented the boys on their alertness, the girls on their modesty, and the parents on having such promising children, and predicted that the coming years

would unfold noble deeds done by them all. A prediction that was notably fulfilled.

In the evening William and Martha Listun came to fetch their children, and Dorothy Hazzard looked in to talk over the events of the day. Cromwell was delighted to meet these staunch supporters, and told Dorothy Hazzard that the brave defence of the Froom Gate by her "Praying Women" was often the subject of talk by his soldiers, who were always enthused by the recital of her heroic example.

Long and interesting was their conversation. Cromwell wanted to know the real condition of things in Bristol; and the others, how things were shaping in the outside world. For news was very scarce and unreliable in those days.

When it was time for the Listuns and Dorothy Hazzard to leave, General Cromwell asked permission to participate in the family worship. The children and the maids were called into the room, and the General, taking his brown leather-bound Bible, now in the Bristol Baptist College, from his wallet, read in low, measured and reverent tones the one hundred and twenty-fifth Psalm.

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth, even for ever."

Then kneeling down, he led them all to the throne of grace and prayed fervently for victory for their just cause and for an early return of peace and tranquility to the troubled land. He commended all in the room to the protecting providence of God, during the night and throughout all those critical days, and concluded

by praying that the children might have a better time than their parents, but above all, that they might grow up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

The guest-chamber in the Castle House was a plain but comfortable room, and there in a very short time the warrior guest was fast asleep. But in his dreams all the events of the day rose up before him in vivid colours and striking contrasts. But towering above all else was the mighty Bristol fortress, the symbol of oppression, strife, bloodshed and bondage ; tumult and war ; discord and hate. And as he beheld in his dreams this great symbol of cruel subjugation, with its fetid cells, festering dungeons, in which some of the noblest of mankind had languished and wasted away, a sense of horror seized him, and jumping to his feet he struck at it with his sword as St. George struck at the hideous dragon, and as he did so it vanished away, and in its stead there rose before him the peaceful Castle House with its Christian family, surrounded by other peaceful houses, built out of the materials of the demolished Castle, and every house a symbol of home, love, peace, happiness. And then the dream faded away and he awoke, with the sunlight streaming into his room, and heard the ringing laughter of the Governor's four happy children playing on the Castle green.

CHAPTER VI

GREEK MEETS GREEK

“ Unbounded courage and compassion joined,
Tempering each other in the victor's mind,
Alternately proclaim him good and great,
And make the hero and the man complete.”
—*Addison*.

THE next few years were momentous ones for the Puritan Church in Bristol. Many felt with Lionel that the forces making for righteousness must either crystallise themselves into definite tangible forms, or collapse and disappear like the boiling water of an active geyser as it falls back upon the absorbent earth.

For what did the Puritan Church stand? Was there in it any positive truth which, like a little seed, was capable of growth? They who gathered most frequently at the Commissioner's house in the Castle were convinced there was. They had listened with intense interest to Lionel's recital of his experiences in London. The Kiffin Church seemed to be such a seedling. It stood for the spiritual headship of Christ and other great religious truths, as William Kiffin had so eloquently recited in Lionel's hearing.

But the Puritans were quick to foresee that crystallisation of their religious life along this line would be stoutly opposed in Bristol. And they were not mistaken.

Reaction said, “ At whatever cost this monstrous innovation must be swept out of existence.”

Reform said, “ At whatever cost we must build to stand.”

The two temperaments were equally resolute. It was a case of Greek meeting Greek. Reactionaries and Reformers were confronting each other. For the moment the Reactionaries were without the support of the central authority. Cromwell held them in a leash, and would not permit them to strike their deadly blow at reform.

Availing themselves of this respite the Puritans set themselves to organise their forces on definitely positive and sound working principles. At the instigation of Lionel, William Kiffin, of London, was invited to lay before the members the constitution of the Baptist Church.

As no meeting room was large enough to accommodate all the Puritans, it was arranged that the meeting should be held on the Castle green, in front of the house of the Commissioner, as Lionel henceforth will be known. The Castle green was a spacious place covered with soft green grass on which many a sprightly tournament had been played, and where many a brave knight, hoping to win the hand and heart of some fair lady, had in the contest been knocked *hors de combat*. It was here on this green that Mr. Kiffin delivered his discourse on the constitution and mission of the Baptist Church.

Mr. Kiffin began his message with an account of John Smythe, who was formerly a clergyman in the Church of England. Smythe having started a Separatist Church in Lincolnshire, was driven with his fellow members into exile. At Amsterdam the closer study of the New Testament led him to discover that the New Testament church was composed of baptized believers. This discovery became the spring of action both for himself and his fellow believers. Having dissolved the church of which he was the pastor, he baptized himself, and

then those who believed with him. In this striking way the first modern Baptist Church came into being in 1609.

Then Mr. Kiffin went on to describe the constitution and functions of the Baptist Church. The message made a great stir in the Puritan assembly. While many were convinced of the scriptural character of believers' baptism, and gave in their names for baptism, others held that their baptism in infancy had not been invalidated by their separation from the Church of England, and that a second baptism was unnecessary.

Apart from this they were all agreed on the positive truths so clearly explained by Mr. Kiffin. Churches built up on these truths would not only have a reason for their existence, but would be invincible in the presence of opposition.

Colonel Scroope voiced the feelings of those who thought that a Church of the Congregational order would give them all that they required, and that to introduce into it the ordinance of believers' baptism would needlessly antagonise the authorities against them, and subject themselves to needless persecution.

Mr. Kiffin pointed out to the objectors that as they professed to take their stand on what the Scriptures teach and not on the traditions of the Church, they should accept *all* that the Scriptures teach, even believers' baptism. "But," he observed, "I am not here to coerce you against your wills. Our key-word is liberty—liberty for ourselves and liberty for others. If you so wish you may form a Congregational Church, without believers' baptism, or you may form a similar Church with believers' baptism as its door of admission, or you may divide and form both. But the essential thing is that you maintain the unity of the Spirit."

Mr. Kiffin was gratified with the number who were prepared to form themselves into a Baptist Church. Selina and William and Martha Listun were among the first to give in their names. Dorothy Hazzard expressed the wish to join them in baptism, but would not join the Baptist Church, as she felt she could not leave the remnant of the Puritans who did not wish to follow either Colonel Scroope or Lionel Wakefield.

The baptismal service was held on the following day in the River Froom at Baptist Mills. It was as impressive as it was novel. There was a large crowd to witness the immersion of so many prominent citizens. Mr. Kiffin's sermon was listened to with rapt attention, and his earnest prayer brought the Saviour's presence very near to every candidate.

When Mr. Kiffin had taken his station in the river, Lionel, who was acting as steward, led down into the river, as the first candidate, the heroine of the city, Mrs. Dorothy Hazzard. When Mr. Kiffin received her, he said: "A great woman in Israel to-day is following the lowly path her Saviour trod. Our sister is great in her faith, her devotion, her zeal, and in her fearless courage." And then addressing the candidate, he said, "On thy profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I baptize thee, my sister, into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The next to be led down into the river was William Listun, followed by his wife, Martha Listun. And concerning that worthy pair Mr. Kiffin said: "Good and consistent champions of pure and undefiled religion are these two disciples, who like Priscilla and Aquila, entertain the Church in their own house, and are great helpers in Christ Jesus."

The next candidate Lionel led down was his own dear wife, Selina. When Mr. Kiffin received her he said : " Here is the Christian wife of Commissioner Wakefield, who was one with her husband in resigning his position in the city rather than countenance wrongdoing. We thank God for their spirit of self-sacrifice in a noble cause. The Commissioner was himself baptized some time ago in London, and it is through his instrumentality that I am here to-day. He will be known among you as Bristol's pioneer Baptist."

The service was continued until all the candidates were baptized. In the evening the candidates, with the exception of Dorothy Hazzard, assembled at the Castle House, and were duly enrolled by Mr. Kiffin as members of the Baptist Church. Then followed the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, at which service the members pledged themselves to be true and loyal to Christ their Lord, and to use every gift with which they were endowed to further the interests of His Kingdom.

It is now time to introduce the reader to two other characters who will play very important, though opposite parts in this story.

At the baptismal service there stood, on the outskirts of the crowd, a young man who had but recently come to Bristol. He had heard the rumour of the novel open-air service, and had gone to see the minister immerse his converts. He was a young man of fine physique, clear open countenance, with firm set lips and deep pensive eyes, looking out from beneath a broad, benevolent forehead.

At school he had been the champion in all manner of sports. His temperament was ever sunny, bubbling over with fun and merriment. As a wrestler, he was

unrivalled. Fearlessly would he enter the contests with lads almost twice his own size and weight, and invariably would carry off the honours of the game.

By the side of this young man of prepossessing appearance, there happened to be standing another young man of massive proportions, bullet head, large square jaw, dark ferrety eyes which glared contemptuously at the novel scene.

These two young men were total strangers to each other, but were destined to become well-known to each other in the after years, and to play their opposite parts with consummate skill and determination.

The young man of benevolent countenance was Edward Terrill, who had just settled in the city from Almondsbury, where for many generations his ancestors had lived very worthy lives, though by no means wealthy. His father was dead, and his mother, struck with the thoughtful bearing of the lad, had apprenticed him to one Robert Hayes, a schoolmaster in Corn Street, an arrangement which gave the studious lad unbounded gratification.

The young man with the ferrety eyes was George Derville, who came of a family of lawyers, who oftener frequented the ale-house than the House of God, who generally took leading parts in city brawls, and were not infrequently engaged by the clergy to interrupt the meetings of the Puritans and to molest their leaders. The glaring, flashing eyes indicated that the blood of his fathers was tingling in his veins.

"What new-fangled religion is this?" said Derville, partly to himself and partly to Terrill by his side.

"I don't know," said Terrill, "but it is wonderfully impressive."

"Impressive," said Derville excitedly. "I should think that only asses would go through a performance like this."

"But," replied Terrill, with slowly measured words, "asses could not act so decorously as these do, nor sing so joyously, nor pray so fervently."

"They must be idiots," said Derville, determined to give full vent to his feelings, "to think that the priests will let them renounce as invalid the baptism of Mother Church."

"But if the priests are men of God, they will never want to stop the worship of God by godly people."

"The priests have their own notions of godliness, and as long as my name is George Derville, I'll back the priests against these stupid fanatics. I only want the priests to say the word, and I am ready to drown them all for their arrant presumption."

Edward Terrill was unacquainted with the religious controversies of the day. In the quiet secluded village of Almondsbury there had been no attempt to challenge the accepted order of worship in the parish church. Whether that order was scriptural or otherwise no one had ever taken the trouble to enquire. The parish priest seemed to be supreme in his profession, and everybody appeared to be perfectly satisfied, for not a ripple of the great surging movements that had been sweeping over the country and the Continent for a more scriptural expression of faith and worship had ever come into the village. Edward Terrill was therefore surprised to find a religious service so different to the service at Almondsbury, and still more surprised that such a service should be opposed by the priests as indicated by the heated statements of George Derville.

Turning to the stranger who had so offensively introduced himself, Terrill said : " Since you have given me your name, George Derville, I will give you mine, and say that as long as my name is Edward Terrill, I will advocate the right of every Englishman to worship God in the way he deems best, and if necessary I will defend the oppressed against the oppression of their adversaries. Here is my hand, George Derville. I offer it to you as a pledge that whenever we meet, as we are certain to do, on the opposite sides of any worthy cause, I shall oppose you and seek in every lawful way to frustrate your evil purpose."

George Derville was taken aback by such a fearless and unexpected challenge ; but as he was then without a colleague and without authority, he thought it prudent to stop his fuming, and shake the proffered hand, and so he cynically said :

" I am glad to meet you, Terrill. If you lack common sense you do not lack grit, and I like you for your pluck, but do not imagine a mouse can thwart a lion."

This was their mutual introduction. It did not lack in powder and spark. The two young men were types : they represented the opposing religious forces in the city. The one stood for tyrannical priesthood and the other for liberty. It was again Greek meeting Greek. And a clash of arms sooner or later was inevitable.

As the service was concluded the two young men parted company and went in opposite directions. Edward Terrill went back to the city full of wonder over the service he had witnessed. The words of the preacher rang in his ears : " You must believe, first of all, that Jesus Christ is your Saviour, for then and only then are you fit for baptism."

Everything was strangely new to him. The emphasis on "belief" as a condition of salvation was so different to the ritualistic teaching in the Almondsbury church. And the immersion of the candidates gave the ordinance the solemnity of a funeral.

Interested and yet perplexed, Edward Terrill reached his rooms in Corn Street, and resolved at the earliest opportunity he would consult the Commissioner, who, as the pioneer Baptist, was presumably an authority on the subject.

Tired with the day's teaching and the excitement of the baptismal service, he went to bed, and dreamed of a baptismal pool as large as the ocean, and men and women of every nation crowding into it to be baptized; but ever and anon there rose before him a dark, scowling figure, who whispered, "I only want the priests to say the word and I am ready to drown them all."

When Edward Terrill awoke in the morning he knew that life henceforth would be for him a conflict with evil men.

CHAPTER VII

A PURITAN HOME

"She is a woman : one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears."

—*Lowell.*

THE demolition of the Bristol Castle was not so simple an undertaking as it had appeared to be at first. The Commissioner encountered great opposition from the City Fathers.

The Castle gave a lustre to the city because of its strength and impregnable character. Was it not the largest and finest castle outside London? And was not its famous Don John Tower, although it stood over a horrible dungeon, the most magnificent tower in England? Built by the redoubtable son of Henry the First, Robert Earl of Gloucester, in the middle part of the twelfth century, the Castle possessed all the charm and glamour of antiquity.

From many quarters there was stern resistance to the order of Cromwell to raze the massive fortification to the ground, but as the Castle might prove a menace to the Commonwealth, Cromwell's order was irrevocable.

This opposition was accompanied with an element of real danger to the Commissioner himself. Not suspecting that anyone bore him any malice, he had enrolled as workmen all who made application for the work of demolition. Among these was Robert Slyman, the sailor who had carried off Selina's maid, and was

frustrated in his wicked design by Lionel. The sailor was never identified, and when he applied for work, the Commissioner, without any hesitation, engaged him.

He was an agile and fearless workman and would climb the highest walls and towers without any thought of falling. For this reason he was made foreman of the gang. This gave him the opportunity he sought for, namely, of inflicting some bodily injury upon the Commissioner. Many were the traps he set to accomplish his fell purpose. One day when the Commissioner was passing under a wall, a large stone fell near enough to brush his arm, but fortunately it did not hurt him.

Another day an innocent looking timber, which had been skilfully poised, fell as he was passing along an uncovered corridor. But again a merciful providence protected him from what might have been instant death. Soon after this a partly stripped floor mysteriously collapsed when the Commissioner was walking over it, and he was thrown violently into the basement, but happily escaped with only a few minor bruises.

The sailor was full of commiseration over these mishaps, and no one suspected any cruel design behind them.

In deference to the wishes of the City Fathers several of the dwelling houses, inside the walls, were preserved and sold. Colonel Scroope was able to buy his house and remain a close neighbour of the Commissioner.

After the demolition was accomplished the old dry moat which ran from the Avon behind St. Peter's Church to the foot of Castle Mill Street, was filled in with debris. Castle Street was made to connect Peter Street with the Old Market, and residential buildings were erected on either side. A road was cut right across the Castle green, and named "Castle Green" to

perpetuate the memory of this once verdant spot. And the old path from the Castle to the "King's Orchard," near St. Philip's Church, was retained, and is now known as Queen Street.

The retention of the Castle House, the spacious home of many successive Governors, and now for many years the home of Lionel and Selina, gave the Castle green site a special attraction. Stately residential buildings were erected and occupied by influential citizens, and the green became the fashionable quarter of the city.

Selina's domestic rule was highly commendable. Methodical, diligent, unsparing, she combined the maximum of comfort with the minimum of fret; her family and her visitors were always at their ease. Ever bright, pleasant and hospitable, she was beloved and esteemed by all.

She was a woman of few words, but every word was a poem, full of rare sympathy, charm and sweetness. She took her place amongst the praying women in the church meetings, and offered brief but very effective prayers.

She was one of the women who felt intensely the power of Mr. Kiffin's exhortation, and her baptism made a deep impression upon her life. Many who argued that you can be good without being baptized, saw in her beautiful Christian life an unanswerable argument for obedience to the divine command, and disregarding their objections, observed the rite as believers, and joined the Baptist Church.

As a mother, she prayed fervently that her children might become earnest Christians.

It was indeed a happy moment to her when Grace, her eldest child, came into her room and said: "Mother dear, I have seen in the crucified Son of God my own

personal Saviour, and am going to trust Him for my salvation ; will you pray that I may always be good and true ? ”

The happy mother kissed her child, and kneeling by her side prayed : “ Lord Jesus, I thank Thee for my child’s salvation. Keep her in Thy love, guard her by Thy grace, and make her more and more Thine with every passing day.”

The mother’s prayer was registered in heaven and fully answered. But the answer came in one of the strangest ways of God’s providence.

By a not surprising coincidence, Kathleen Listun, the eldest child of William and Martha Listun, was led to make a similar decision ; and as Grace and Kathleen were inseparable companions it was arranged that they should be baptized together at the next service.

Like the first, this service was attended by a great crowd of people, and many hearts were deeply moved when Grace and Kathleen, dressed in snowy-white gowns, were led down into the river. For in the baptism of these two beautiful maidens was seen the sweet innocence of childhood greeting the eternal innocence of Jesus.

The parents were filled with joy over this consecration of their first-born to the Lord, and their united prayers were that their other children might follow in due time.

Those were halcyon days for the Puritans in Bristol, when the Protector Cromwell reigned over the affairs of State ; it enabled them to organise their churches, and to develop their religious life without the annoyance of their unfriendly neighbours.

The Commissioner was regarded as the embodiment of the Commonwealth spirit. All the improvements in the city came to be associated with his name. For

these he received many congratulations which he gracefully declined to accept for himself, but willingly accepted them for the Protector.

Lionel was a happy man, happy in his home and church life, happy as a Commissioner, and happy as a citizen, in the city he had come to love. But in the midst of all his joy a great sorrow came to him, which took the light out of his life for many and many a day.

During the demolition of the Castle the children of the city were wont, when the workmen were gone to their homes, to play amongst the ruins. One evening they were exceptionally playful, full of life and fun and frolic. Selina was sitting on the verandah knitting a woollen garment for her eldest child and talking to Dorothy Hazzard, who had called to have a chat over the affairs of the church.

"The baptismal service when Grace was baptized," said Dorothy, "has created, amongst many of my friends, a strong desire to observe the ordinance."

"I am not surprised," said Selina. "Grace herself said it was like heaven to her."

"Oh, she is such a heavenly-minded child," continued Dorothy.

"Yes," quietly replied the mother, "and yet she is so perfectly natural. Look at her now playing with her companions. She is the very soul of the game."

Just then Grace came into sight with all the others following rapidly at her heels. She looked the picture of health and happiness, with her rosy cheeks and her auburn hair flying wildly about her head.

The children had finished one very exciting game. "Now," said Grace, "let us play hide-and-seek. I will hide myself and you are to find me. Stay here until

you count one hundred, and then come and search for me."

And with that she bounded off behind the ruined wall and piles of stones and timber. She had scarcely gone a minute before a piercing cry rent the air. In trying to find a good hiding-place she had gone amongst a heap of planks which had been thrown across the entrance to the dungeon of the demolished Don John Tower.

The dungeon was a vaulted chamber which could only be approached by a trap-door in the roof. Grace had no sooner got in amongst these planks than one gave way and she dropped some thirty feet into the dark and dismal depth. The scream which was heard was the cry of fright that escaped her lips as she fell into the horrible darkness. Another moment and she crashed into the mire which covered the hard stone floor. Happily the blow produced instant unconsciousness, so that while she moaned piteously, she was unconscious of her horrid surroundings.

Instantly the mother and Dorothy rushed in the direction of the cry, followed by all the terrified children. And had it not been for the moans of the unconscious child it is doubtful whether they would have located her position. But even then they had no idea of the dungeon, but simply imagined she had fallen into some hole beneath the timber.

They heard the groans, and set themselves at once to extricate the child. With herculean strength Selina and Dorothy drew back plank after plank. The children too gave valuable assistance. But when all the lighter planks had been shifted, to their horror they discovered the entrance to the dungeon between two heavy beams they were powerless to move. These beams and planks

had been deliberately arranged by Robert Slyman over the mouth of the dungeon, with the idea of engulfing the Commissioner, who was expected to examine them in the morning and assess their value.

Selina and Dorothy now realised that Grace had fallen into the dungeon. That discovery aggravated their distress. They pulled vigorously at the heavy beams but could not move them. Their case seemed hopeless. They called to the child whom they could not see in the dark depths, and got no answer except the groans which were getting fainter and fainter.

"Oh, Lord, help me, and give me back my child," exclaimed the distracted mother.

"Run," said Dorothy to Kathleen Listun, "run and see if the Commissioner has returned."

"Yes, run," said Selina, "and bring anyone you can find."

Like a flash Kathleen was off, and though the ground was uneven she was soon out of sight. When she reached the Castle House she saw the Commissioner walking slowly towards it, with a young man by his side, and deep in conversation. Running up to them she screamed out her message: "Oh, do come quickly, Colonel Wakefield; Grace has fallen into a horrid pit and is dying."

In a moment the quiet, pensive Commissioner was changed into a man of action. He rushed towards her saying, "Where, Kathleen, where?" And following the direction of her pointing hand, he trembled to think of his darling child dying in that dreadful dungeon.

The young man ran with the Commissioner to the scene of the accident. And there they found Selina and Dorothy and all the children pulling at the heavy

beams but unable to move them. Now they were quickly shifted, and the entrance to the dungeon fully uncovered.

The dungeon was so deep and dark that it was with difficulty they could see the moaning child huddled up in a heap on the floor below. Seizing a rope which was lying near, Lionel began hurriedly to tie it around his body in order to go down into the dungeon, but realising that the lad and the two women were not strong enough to raise him and the child together, he turned to the lad and said, "Edward, can I trust you? Will you go down and bring her up if her mother and I and Mrs. Hazzard hold the rope?"

"Yes, that I will," promptly replied the lad.

The rope was securely fastened around his body. And carefully though quickly he was lowered into the foul chamber; as he neared the bottom he swung himself so as to avoid stepping upon the child. His feet sunk into the nauseating mire, whose poisonous vapours almost suffocated him. But he was unmoved by the horrors of the place, where deep-dyed criminals and forgotten heroes of the State and Church had alike languished till merciful death ended their sufferings. Stooping down, Edward lifted the moaning, unconscious child very tenderly into his arms and then called to those above to draw them up.

With many prayers upon their lips and in their hearts they drew the lad with his precious burden to the top of the dungeon, and when he had placed her safely in the arms of her father, they returned thanks for the mercy of deliverance from "the horrible pit, and from the mire and clay." Then they brought the child into the house, while Kathleen hastened to fetch the doctor.

At once the doctor pronounced the condition most serious. Both legs had been broken, the spine injured, and a fracture at the base of the skull had produced compression of the brain. "She may recover from the minor injuries, but I fear the injury to the spine, if her life is spared, will mean lifelong helplessness."

Lionel was speechless with grief. Having heard the doctor's statement, he reeled like a drunken man to his own private room, and poured out his soul in a torrent of supplications to his All-wise and Heavenly Father.

Long did he wait there, waiting for an answer. When he reappeared the storm had spent its fury and was gone. A look of calm and peaceful resignation was on his face as he quietly whispered, "Though He slay me yet will I trust Him."

When Lionel had carried Grace to her room and left her in the care of Selina and Dorothy, he returned to Edward Terrill, whom he had left at the door.

"Edward, I cannot thank you enough for what you have done for me this day. Your courage and your gentle handling of Grace have saved her life. May God bless you, lad. The subject of our interrupted conversation we will discuss some other time. You will see the truth, my boy, because you want to be a godly man. Good-night, Edward."

"Oh, is that you, Kathleen?" said Lionel to that ready messenger as she came running to the door as Edward was leaving.

"I have been for the nurse, and she will be here in a few minutes."

"Thank you, Kathleen, for all the help you have given us this evening. I do hope your companion will soon be better. Good-night, my dear."

“ Good-night, Colonel Wakefield.” And with that she ran down the green and by the lad who had so bravely gone down into the dungeon for Grace.

Very shyly she said “ Good-night ” as she passed him on her way to her home in Corn Street. And then to herself she said, “ I don’t know who you are, but you must be good because you are so brave.”

Edward saw the girl run by him and heard her faint “ Good-night.”

“ Good-night, Miss Kathleen,” he cheerily answered, and then to himself he whispered, “ I don’t know who you are, but you must be good because you are so thoughtful.”

It was the first greeting of the maiden and the lad.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OPEN MIND

"What in me is dark,
Illumine ; what is low raise and support ;
That, to the height of this great argument,
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

—*Milton.*

EDWARD TERRILL rose early in the morning following the accident, and his first thought was about the frightened and suffering girl, whom he had lifted like a dead thing from the reeking dungeon.

Before he went to his school he walked over to the Castle House to enquire about her, and was distressed to learn that all through the night she had been in a state of delirium, now playing hide-and-seek with her companions, now laughing merrily in her imaginary games, and now screaming with horror, and begging to be lifted up out of the dreadful pit.

By the morning the delirium had passed away, consciousness had returned, and when she opened her eyes and saw her parents, she faintly said, "Mother, I've had such a horrid dream," and then closed her eyes and fell into a peaceful sleep.

"Thank God for that," said the anxious doctor. "The sleep will save her. Let her sleep as long as she will, and keep the room very quiet. She has fought the dragons of her dreams and will live. Only time can tell what will be the full effect of her serious injuries. We will do our best to help her recover her health and strength, but the Great Physician will do the best of all."

"Amen," said the sorrowing parents. "And the Lord's will be done."

It was as the doctor was leaving the house that Edward Terrill arrived to make his enquiry.

"This is the young man, doctor," said the Commissioner, "who lifted Grace out of the dungeon."

"It was a brave act, lad, and very skilfully done. Had you not lifted her carefully, the injury to the spine would have been fatal. You have saved her life. She is sleeping now and will be weak and helpless for a long time to come."

"Edward," said the Commissioner, "Mrs. Wakefield and I will ever feel grateful to you for what you did last evening. Your action relieves the distress of mind into which I have been thrown by the discovery that the planks were deliberately placed over the dungeon by Robert Slyman, with a view to my falling into that horrid place. It was my intention to examine the timber this morning and assess its value for a purchaser, and not suspecting any danger, I should have walked over that very plank which gave way beneath Grace's feet. I have been making enquiries, and find Robert Slyman put the unsupported plank over the entrance to the dungeon just before he left work, with the remark to one of his mates that 'It might trap a cat during the night.' When I sent for him this morning he was nowhere to be found. The gate watch called a few minutes ago to say that Robert Slyman left the city early this morning, apparently in a great hurry. Edward, the trap was set for me, for some unaccountable reason. But poor Grace fell into it, and is now suffering in her father's stead."

At the end of a week Grace had sufficiently recovered to be permitted to see her deliverer. By that time she

had recalled all that led up to the accident, and had been told how Edward Terrill had lifted her out of the dungeon.

"Who is Edward Terrill, mother? I cannot remember anyone by that name."

"He is a young assistant teacher at Robert Haynes' school. He is very studious, and inclined to be religious. He has attended several Puritan meetings in the city, especially those in the house of Colonel Scroope. It was there where your father first met him. He has been present at our baptismal services, but cannot understand the ordinance. It seems to mystify him."

"Mother, may I see him and thank him for lifting me out of the dungeon?"

"Yes, my dear, as soon as you are strong enough, we will let him come and see you."

"And mother, when he comes, may Kathleen be here as well to see him?"

"Yes, darling."

And so it transpired that when Edward Terrill was taken into the sick room, there, sitting by the bed and holding the patient's hand, was Kathleen Listun, whose face and form and thoughtful service had engraven themselves upon his memory.

He looked first at the invalid, whose pale, wasted face spoke plainly of her sufferings, and then at the blonde, agile, healthy companion by her side.

Edward felt the warm blood of his young manhood tingling in his veins as Kathleen rose to shake his hand and return his salutation. And when their eyes met, each saw something in the other that neither could define, efface nor forget.

Instantly Edward was recalled and steadied by Grace's voice saying, "I am so pleased to see you, Mr.

Terrill." And as she spoke she held out her wasted hand. Edward took it in his own, and sat by her side.

"I thank you, Mr. Terrill, for saving my life. I don't want to die, though I am not afraid."

"No," said Edward softly, "you must not die, but live and get well and strong again."

"I may never get strong again; I have a feeling I never shall. But I want to live to show what a Saviour I have found."

"That is a very laudable desire," said Edward, "which I hope you will fully realise."

"I have a lot of friends in Bristol, and next to father and mother, Kathleen Listun here is my greatest friend. May I claim you as my friend, Mr. Terrill? I feel I ought after all you have done for me."

"Yes, you may," said Edward, not knowing what else to say.

"Then may I call you by the name Daddy calls you?"

"Yes, you may call me Edward."

"And may Kathleen call you Edward too?"

"Yes, if she wishes; I do not mind in the least," said Edward, blushing slightly.

And so there, in that room of suffering those three young people pledged themselves to lifelong friendship, and to call each other by their Christian names.

Noticing the deepening pallor in Grace's face, the sure sign of exhaustion, Edward rose to leave, and taking the thin white hand very gently in his, he said, "Good-bye, Grace; you are very tired, and I must not weary you. Some day you will be stronger. I shall value your friendship and shall remember you in my prayers." Then, reaching forth his hand to Kathleen Listun, he said, "Good-bye, Kathleen; your friendship

too I shall greatly esteem." Their hands tightened slightly as they said "Good-bye," and a tinge of colour came into the maiden's clear, open face.

After this visit to the sick room, Edward and the Commissioner retired to the library to resume the conversation that was interrupted on the evening of the accident.

"I cannot understand," said Edward, "the religion of those people in the city who have separated themselves from the ancient Church. Could they not have remained inside the Church, and have put the wrong things right, and maintained the dignity of Christian worship? Churches are much more appropriate buildings than houses with chimneys in them."

"That sounds very feasible," said the Commissioner. "But in actual experience is disappointing. After all, God is not so dependent upon stones and mortar as we suppose. He is no respecter of places, persons or institutions. He is more concerned with the spirit which animates the worshippers than the edifice in which they meet. Besides, it is not so easy to rectify the wrong when the wrong is all about you. The Word of the Lord says, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.'

"Long did God's faithful ones lift up their voices against the superstitions of the Church. Long did William Yeamans and others contend for a more scriptural form of worship. But all to no purpose. I was one of the most ardent advocates of internal rectification, but I was like a voice crying in the wilderness. The bishops and the clergy were stone deaf to

all entreaties. Because I loved the Church I wanted to see it an institution of spiritually-minded men and women, depending not on forms and ceremonies for their salvation, but upon the free and unfettered grace of God. I declined at the first to associate myself with Dorothy Hazzard and her four friends, when in 1640 they took a definite stand for a separate religious organisation. But experience taught me that all my efforts to reform the Church were in vain, and so I, like many others, was constrained to leave."

"But do I understand aright," said Edward, "that our salvation depends not upon the forms and ceremonies of the Church, but solely upon the simple faith of the individual worshipper?"

"Yes, that is the New Testament teaching. 'For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast; for we are His workmanship.'

"The Christian life begins in a change of heart, which is called conversion. This again is described as a new birth. 'Ye must be born again,' said Jesus to Nicodemus. And when any soul, conscious of its own sinfulness, turns penitently to the Lord, as the one and only Saviour, that soul experiences the new birth, and is born into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ."

Edward pondered in silence for several seconds and remarked, "It is very profound. It knocks away all the crutches of the soul and leaves you leaning upon Christ alone."

"Exactly so," said the Commissioner, "and Christ is our all-sufficiency."

"I must give so fundamental a transaction my most careful consideration," said Edward thoughtfully. "But there is another matter which mystifies me, Colonel

Wakefield. Soon after I came to Bristol I witnessed a novel service at Baptist Mills. I heard Mr. Kiffin's sermon on believers' baptism. The idea was so new I did not take in the full import of the subject. I have witnessed several baptismal services since, even the last one which was only a few weeks ago. Can you tell me anything about this strange ordinance? "

"I can," said the Commissioner feelingly. "I am glad you witnessed the first, for then my own dear wife was baptized, and at the last my darling Grace and her companion Kathleen were among the candidates."

"Indeed," said Edward, surprised. "I was not aware that Grace and Kathleen were among the candidates. But now I recall two young women who in snow-white gowns made a deep impression upon the onlookers by their youthful surrender to the strange ordinance. Were those two Grace and Kathleen? "

"Yes, those two snow-white figures were the two dear girls you have seen in the sick room this afternoon."

"But what is believers' baptism, Colonel Wakefield? Is it in any way productive of eternal life, as baptism is said to be in the Church? "

"No, it is useless as an instrument for such a purpose. Baptism is a God-appointed ordinance to denote the submission of the soul by faith to Jesus Christ. It is an outward sign of an inward spiritual grace. The Christian life is a life of obedience to the Saviour. Christian obedience must begin somewhere, and Christ has commanded that it shall begin in our baptism."

"Thank you so much for your helpful explanation. This subject too I must carefully consider. Just one question more. I have noticed, Colonel Wakefield, that at all the baptismal services great crowds assemble,

and among the spectators there have been some men and women who have said offensive things."

"It is always so," said the Commissioner, "but we must not mind that. In some places they molest and do grievous bodily harm by throwing stones, mud, and other missiles at the candidates. I had a very narrow escape from injury when I was baptized in London."

"Who is George Derville, may I ask?"

"George Derville? Why, he is the clever son of a bad old lawyer, who is studying law, and shows unmistakable signs of following in the ways of his father. He frequents the ale-houses, is the ready tool of the priests, and as a boy took part in wrecking Dorothy Hazzard's house in Broad Street, which was carried out by a gang of ruffians under the direction of his father. But thanks to the Cromwellian Government he is powerless to interfere with us now."

"Though I have seen him at each baptismal service," said Edward, "he has not come near enough to speak to me since the first service when, standing by my side, he expressed himself rather vigorously concerning the ordinance. He made me feel that he was plotting mischief and ought to be watched."

"Yes," said the Commissioner, "he is, I fear, as evil-minded as his father, and needs watching."

"And God helping me, I will watch George Derville," said Edward Terrill solemnly.

And with that resolution quietly but firmly spoken, Edward thanked the Commissioner for his illuminating conversation, and left the house.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH OF OUR FATHERS

“ If I have freedom in my soul,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone that soar above
Enjoy such liberty.”

—*Richard Lovelace.*

A PECULIARITY of the seventeenth century was the close association of the Puritan Church and home. There was no sharp break between the two provinces of experience. They shaded softly into each other like the adjacent colours in the rainbow. As their homes became their churches in rotation, so their churches became their homes in which they loved to dwell.

The family life at the Castle House was typical of the family life in general. It was a church in miniature, and the minister was often the teacher of the children.

When that godly man, William Yeamans, passed away, he was succeeded by another minister of similar spiritual outlook and fervour. For some years he made his home at the Listuns and became the tutor of their children. Officially he was the minister at St. Philip's Church, but was heart and soul with the Puritans.

James Wroth was an interesting teacher, and his bright juvenile spirit enabled him to enter into all the games and pastimes of the children. In this way he won their confidence and love. Kathleen, the eldest, was old enough to understand why her parents had discontinued their attendance at St. Philip's Church,

but her brothers Maurice and Gerald were perplexed and inclined to think their parents were foolish.

"Why can't we go to church, Mr. Wroth, like other children?" they enquired one day. "The churches are bigger and nicer buildings than our kitchens and dining rooms. The boys tell us that in the church there are beautiful images and crosses, and lots of lighted candles, and priests with long flowing robes, and that they have chants and singing and processions. It seems to us that churches are better than houses with chimneys."

Mr. Wroth was a wise and patient teacher, and though he was a clergyman, he carefully explained to the boys why they nor their parents went to the parish church.

"The images are apt to be worshipped instead of God," he said. "The prostration of the body before a wooden cross was a poor substitute for prostrating their hearts before Jesus Christ. Candle-burning to the saints was pure superstition that could bring no real merit to anyone. The rich flowing robes of the priests did not accord with the simple dress worn by Jesus and the Apostles. And the processions, chants and singing often led people to look to these things for their salvation, rather than to Jesus Christ."

"I know that father is a Christian in everything he does," said Maurice emphatically.

"Yes," said Gerald, "and mother is a darling woman."

"Well," said Mr. Wroth, "these simple religious meetings in 'houses with chimneys' have made your father and mother what they are. Your parents have learnt that beauty of character comes from cheerful surrender to the will of Christ."

"Then that's good enough for me," said Maurice.

"And for me," said his brother.

In this way Mr. Wroth won for Puritanism two whole-hearted adherents, who as young saplings would grow up in the garden of the Lord.

Margaret, the youngest child in the Listun family, was now a charming little girl of five tender years, whose greatest nursery game was to put on her brother's coat, stand upon a stool for a pulpit, and looking very grave, say, "And now let us begin the meeting with prayer." Then the head would bow, the eyes close, and the sweet little treble voice would say, "God bless Daddy and Mammy, and Kathleen and Maurice and Gerald, and my dolly, and Rover, and everybody. Amen."

Straws tell the direction of the quiet flowing stream, and the nursery game of Margaret Listun was prophetic of the beautiful life the coming years would unfold.

Kathleen, the eldest, was unmistakably the flower of the family. Tall, dark, and slender in form, with soft sallow complexion, and long black curls falling loosely about her head, with eyes that sparkled with fun and mischief—eyes whose bright liquid depths reflected a soul capable of great thought and sympathy—Kathleen presented a picture of sweet and happy girlhood.

Kathleen Listun and Grace Wakefield had been chums from their earliest recollections. They were so much with each other and so like each other in their dispositions, that a casual observer might have taken them for sisters.

They were about fourteen years of age when Grace's playful life was terminated by the fall into the dungeon. The accident to Grace seemed to add years to the experience of Kathleen. She seemed to have grown into

a woman in the night. She was full of acute anxiety for her friend, and would spare no pains to render any service that would contribute to the sufferer's comfort. But while she was attentive to Grace, she took a keen interest in her church, and regularly attended the meetings. She listened with rapt attention to the addresses, and would return and give very detailed reports to Grace.

At first there was no appointed minister. Various members, including her father and the Commissioner, would conduct the service and preach the sermon. Occasionally a travelling minister would come to the city and conduct the service, like Mr. Cann of Amsterdam.

One day Kathleen came into Grace's room and said : " Grace dear, we have had such a dear, good man of God preaching to us to-day. I don't know where he is from, nor where he is going. But everybody says they never heard the Gospel so plainly and yet so beautifully preached before. He has such a pleasant voice and manner, and he looks so gentle and heavenly minded. I heard your Dad ask him whether he could stay and be our minister. All the members would like him to become the pastor of the church."

" Do you think he will ? " enquired Grace.

" I don't know, but I think he will, for I heard him say he would make it a matter of prayer."

And so it came to pass that Henry Hynam became the pastor of the first Baptist Church in Bristol. He was a quiet, gentle, lovable minister, deeply versed in the Scripture, and was a most painstaking teacher. He was admirably suited for that period of comparative calm which then prevailed, when Oliver Cromwell ruled in England. Henry Hynam shrank from the storm of

opposition and gloried in peace, which enabled him to take his flock, like a shepherd, into the green pastures, and beside the still waters, that they might quietly meditate upon the things of God.

This minister drew such a large congregation that it became necessary to find some bigger building to accommodate the church. Casting around they were led to secure a large hall in the dismantled monastery off the Broad Weir. The principal buildings had been in ruins ever since the days of Henry VIII, but halls which had served the old monks for library, refectory and recreation purposes had been preserved, and it was here in one of these halls that the young Baptist Church made a home for itself.

In his quest for truth, Edward Terrill paid occasional visits to this church in its new surroundings. He enjoyed the ministry of Mr. Hynam, though it did not grip him like the ministry of Thomas Ewins, who was then pastor at Dorothy Hazzard's church. The theology was similar, but the presentation of it lacked the strong, virile, driving force of Mr. Ewins' powerful personality. And yet in Henry Hynam's preaching there was a distinct note of conviction that arrested Edward's attention.

Thomas Ewins had nothing to say about believers' baptism. But Henry Hynam, like Mr. Kiffin, was most emphatic in declaring the ordinance to be the duty and privilege of all believers.

Edward was present one day when Mr. Hynam preached a most winsome sermon on the duty of Christian discipleship in relation to believers' baptism, as members of a Christian Church, and as citizens in a city of unbelievers. It was a beautiful thing to be a

Christian, a Christ-like man, in the Church and city and the State.

Then the preacher appealed to all the believers present who had not been baptized to begin this beautiful life with Christ in the waters of baptism. For, said he, the Church, the city and the world were waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

The sermon made a deep impression upon the hearers. Men and women stood up in different parts of the hall and gave in their names for baptism. The two brothers of Kathleen Listun and the two brothers of Grace Wakefield rose and expressed their resolve to live the Christ-like life. Other young disciples present, emboldened by these decisions, also gave in their names for baptism. Among them were a lad and girl of very humble and obscure origin, whose young hearts had been completely won for the Saviour.

The lad was Andrew Gifford, destined to become one of the greatest preachers in the seventeenth century, and the girl was Hannah Brown, destined, though she knew it not then, to become the wife of Andrew Gifford, and the unfailing supporter of that great champion of religious liberty, amidst all his manifold tribulations.

Every fibre in Edward Terrill's soul was stirred by these examples of enthusiastic discipleship. Edward was delighted to see the brothers of Kathleen and Grace give in their names. And when Andrew Gifford, a spare, frail-looking lad, with radiant face and eyes sparkling with enthusiasm, got up, and with a voice tremulous with emotion said: "And I too, Mr. Hynam, would like to take up my cross and follow Jesus," he felt an almost irresistible impulse to take his stand by the side of the younger lad, whom he had never seen before,

and make a similar declaration. But something held him back.

The eyes of the two lads exchanged glances as Andrew resumed his seat. And the eyes of Andrew seemed to say, "Why don't you take your stand, Edward?" But something held Edward back. What was that something?

Edward hurried from the meeting with a very heavy heart. He saw the spiritual peril from which he would gladly escape. He saw the alluring goal of a beautiful Christ-manifesting life. But his young heart was burdened with a sense of sin, and his strong will rebelled at the simple plan of salvation.

Such a colossal transaction as ridding the soul of sin surely required some great effort, some great sacrifice, some great suffering, and he was quite prepared for either, to be rid of sin and sure of heaven. But to do nothing except "believe" seemed utterly inadequate, and therefore insufficient for the benefit he so much desired. It was this doubt about the adequacy of belief that held him back.

Edward was still in this doubting mood when some days later he paid another visit to Colonel Scroope's meeting. He took his seat amongst the worshippers, and while he sat there he had a remarkable vision. All the Puritan meetings he had ever attended passed rapidly before his mind. The many addresses to which he had listened were recalled; the different interviews with Colonel Scroope and Commissioner Wakefield; the chaste and saintly lives of the Puritans, their courage, fortitude and faith, all, all, passed in review before him.

Then the two systems of religion rose before him: the Anglican, cold, formal, mechanical, superstitious;

the Puritan, warm, real, unconventional, overflowing with faith and fervour, and disclosing itself as a most pleasing thing in every look and action of daily life.

Then above the meetings and the members of these diverse systems of religion there arose before him a picture of the Eternal Son of God divesting Himself of all His sovereign majesty, glory and wealth, and willingly and lovingly accepting all the humiliating restrictions of human flesh, and as such, enduring untold provocations, and finally tasting death for every man, that He might bring every man back to God. As the vision rose to this sublime magnitude, Edward saw in Christ an adequacy of effort, sacrifice and suffering to cover every sin, and as he sat there, lost in wonder and admiration, a voice spoke to him out of the glory of eternal self-sacrifice, saying : " This is the way, walk ye in it."

That was decisive. Edward Terrill accepted the message and took his stand on the impregnable rock of belief in Jesus Christ. And on that day a stalwart young layman of remarkable ability, courage and resource, put himself body, soul, and substance at the disposal of Christ, to be a Christ-like man in Bristol. And the Baptist College which he afterwards founded is the tangible witness in the twentieth century that, having put his hand to the plough, Edward Terrill never turned back.

CHAPTER X

THE CONSPIRACY

"What though the field is lost?
All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield."
—Milton.

GEORGE DERVILLE from his earliest infancy was a head-strong and self-willed child. In vain did his parents try to control him, but he always contrived to have his way. Neither scolding nor thrashing made the slightest impression. His parents knew nothing of the gentle art of coaxing and drawing the child, and therefore never tried it. George would cry and stamp and rave until he got what he wanted. Very stupidly would his parents yield to his passing whims, "to save," as they explained to their neighbours, "stirring up his young blood, you know."

When as a child, George made this discovery of power, he exploited it in the most unreasonable ways. When he grew older he supplemented his ravings with threats of various kinds, so that his parents became afraid of him. In this they could not honestly complain. They were reaping what they had sown. They indulged in alcoholic liquors so frequently that they were seldom sober. They were constantly raving against the restraints of godliness. They never taught their boy anything about the Child who was ever subject to His parents and "grew up in favour with God and man." George had never knelt at his mother's

knee in prayer, had never been taught to love the sacred name of Jesus, had never been told to love his neighbour as himself. He had grown up under his parents' evil influence to disregard the restraints of religion, to mock at those who did, and to molest and persecute them whenever he got a chance.

He was articled to his father's firm of lawyers, but while he studied law and how to administer it, he was lawless to a degree towards God. He was but a lad when his father superintended the raid on Dorothy Hazzard's house, but young as he was he revelled in it, and added his share to the work of destruction.

When his companion, Robert Slyman the sailor, carried off Selina's maid, Bessie Atkins, he shouted, "Good luck, Robert, and a good time to you." And when the blow from Lionel's fist released the maiden from Slyman's grasp, George Derville swore he would help Robert have his revenge on Lionel.

During the Royalist occupation, Derville and Slyman indulged themselves in victimising the Puritans and making that period a reign of terror for these good men and women. By clever scouting they discovered their meeting places, and by their organised bands of ruffians would create such a disturbance as to make worship impossible. This they did so craftily that few suspected they were the ringleaders.

During the first part of the Royalist occupation Lionel, as a Royalist, was in great favour. It was therefore impolitic to plot an act of revenge while his star was in the ascendent. But when as a new convert to Puritanism, Lionel went to London to interview Pastor Kiffin, Slyman was detailed to shadow him, while Derville was to watch the party in Bristol. And it was Slyman who organised the mud and stone throwing at

Lionel's baptism, and threw the stone which so narrowly missed striking Lionel's head.

With the deliberate intention of causing the Commissioner some injury he accepted work at the Castle, and after various abortive attempts, at last succeeded in cruelly injuring the Commissioner's eldest daughter.

This unexpected termination of the plot greatly alarmed Slyman, and, fearing the consequences, he discussed what was best to be done with his co-conspirator, George Derville.

"I set the trap for the Commissioner, George; I did not think those children would be playing there. The Commissioner must have a charmed life; every train I have laid for him has missed fire."

"Never mind, Robert, his turn will come some day. But in the meanwhile, he has something to go on with. Until the storm blows over, you had better make yourself scarce. Somebody will be sure to say you did it on purpose. You get out of the city as soon as you can in the morning, and make for London. I will watch your interests in Bristol, and by a secret messenger will keep you fully acquainted with all that takes place. You watch the movements of Cromwell and the Parliamentarians, and when you can put a spoke into their wheel, do it. Keep me well acquainted with the trend of events there, for I have a feeling that this Cromwellianism will totter to the ground, and then we shall come into our own."

Thus these two workers of iniquity continued their evil conspiracy. Robert Slyman spent most of the night preparing for his hurried departure in the morning; and as soon as the gates of the city were opened he passed through, and was soon lost in the larger world beyond.

On his arrival in London, Slyman took rooms near William Kiffin's church, as being the most likely place to obtain capital.

But during the Cromwellian period the informer was out of office. The parish churches were staffed with ministers who had no particular love for the Prayer Book ; but who had a great passion for preaching the Gospel and making disciples of all men ; and sometimes it would happen that a Cromwellian Red-coat would occupy the parish pulpit and exhort the worshippers. The number of ordained clergymen who were non-conformist in spirit and practice is indicated by the two thousand ministers who, in 1662, rather than subscribe to the Act of Uniformity, forfeited their livings and went out with their families to face penury and persecution.

The record of Robert Slyman's observations in London is of historical value, though it was not written for that purpose. He registered movements and dispatched his messages to George Derville with all the care and secrecy of a Scotland Yard detective.

His first dispatch contained the message : " Keep an eye upon the meeting-houses, George. Kiffin has just sent off those Puritans I so splendidly discomfited on their way to London. Goodman Atkins, Goodman Pole and Richard Moon have recovered from their wounds and are now in good health, but are as puritanical as ever. I have heard them ranting and raving at their meetings."

Another message contained the information : " I have attended a valedictory meeting at Kiffin's church. Roger Williams, an old Puritan rogue, is going back to New England. He has been in London prating about a new colony he says he has founded, and which he

calls Rhode Island. This colony is to be the religious man's Utopia. He says he got the land in a square deal with the Red Indians, but I've got my doubts. As an adventurer he is not likely to pay for what he can get by force. He succeeded in getting several interviews with the Parliamentary Commissioners, and inveigled them into granting a charter of absolute religious liberty for the whole colony. What he gave or promised for such an unprecedented privilege I am at a loss to know. Anyhow, whatever the inducement, the thing was done, for the charter was on show at the meeting.

"I never heard tell of such a thing before. And Williams says he is going to let Red Indians and niggers, Jews and Quakers, and all the riff-raff of the world come and settle in his colony, and they can all think as they like, and worship how they like, and he won't care a button. George, we shall soon hear of queer things going on in Rhode Island.

"I learned also that Williams has adopted that Baptist idea of liberty of conscience, and says he will carry it with him to the ends of the earth. For teaching this he was kicked out of the Old Colony, and I expect he will be kicked out of Rhode Island too if he is not careful.

"Here is a bit of news for you, George. You remember that young parson chap, Job Bacon, whom your Dad did for at the raid on Dorothy Hazzard's house? Well, he is going out to assist Williams. After Williams settled in Rhode Island he became an out and out Baptist. He induced a friend named Ezekiel Holliman to baptize him, and then Williams baptized Holliman and ten others, and founded the first Baptist Church in America. That was in the year 1639, and apparently it is growing so fast that he is taking back

with him, Job Bacon to help him feed his religious progeny.

"I would like to see how the experiment will answer. I reckon, charter or no charter, they will be using the thumbscrew and the rack before long, to enforce their religious notions. What fun, George, if Williams should send for you and me to turn the screw and stretch the rack."

After a long silence during which George Derville began to feel anxious about Slyman, there came another message saying: "George, my hearty, you must not think I have forgotten you. The fact is I have been living in breathless excitement.

"There is a grand conspiracy on foot. Cromwell's days are numbered, another King is nominated; and very shortly we shall see this King upon His throne. I have been going from one meeting-house to another in order to get definite confirmation of this. The language of the Puritans is very cryptic. Their reference to this new King is always 'with bated breath and whispered humbleness.' Whatever His name is, He is the fifth in His dynasty and will carry everything before Him when He begins to reign. And all the Puritans are going to give Him their allegiance. I reckon Cromwell ought to know something about this conspiracy.

"Keep a keen eye on the Puritans in Bristol, George, they will for certain be in any movement that will overthrow the old order of things. Commissioner Wakefield will be no laggard on that stunt. Won't it be a comic turn of affairs, George, if you and I find ourselves in the pay of Cromwell ferreting out his adversaries? The coming days promise to be very exciting."

The last of many stirring messages came just before the end of the Protectorate.

“George, Cromwell is discredited, and is dying. For a long time his Government has been tottering to the ground. There are too many free-lances in the Government, and not enough adhesion to a common purpose. Not a few of Cromwell’s followers have been hinting, ‘Jack’s as good as his master.’

“Cromwell’s course has been like that of an actor walking on the points of upturned daggers. And the daggers have at last pierced him. Richard Cromwell is nominated for the succession, but Richard is no good for the job. He is a weakling and will make confusion more confounding. Everybody is talking excitedly about Charles, and is predicting that he will soon be back on his father’s throne. Such an expectation makes my blood tingle in every fibre of my body. When Charles returns he will soon root out the free-lances and the dagger-pointing politicians.

“Of course Charles will be diplomatic in all his promises to the Council about liberty of conscience, and freedom and economy, and public control of the country’s finance, for which these old Parliamentary Puritans are such sticklers. But when King Charles sits on the throne, he will reign with a firm hand, and forget all about his promises.

“Lively times are in store, George. I shall soon be able to come back to Bristol to help you clap those pugnacious Puritans into gaol.”

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This chapter covers a number of years which were remarkable for their tranquility. For this the Puritans thanked God, and prayed that the days of peace might

be continued. But ever and anon they concluded their prayers by adding, " And should the days of persecution return, make us to endure as seeing Him who is invisible."

Robert Slyman and George Derville continued their unholy alliance and resolved to pay the debt which was contracted when Lionel Wakefield thwarted an evil purpose.

CHAPTER XI

THE SILVER LINING

“ My little daughter lieth at the point of death.
I pray Thee come and lay Thy hands on her ;
That she may be healed ; and she shall live.”

—*Jairus.*

IN the Castle House there was great trouble. Grace did not make the recovery that was at first expected. The fractured limbs were mending nicely and even the injured spine was yielding to treatment, when a deadly fever made its appearance. The temperature mounted quickly to a great height, and the attentive doctor despaired of pulling his patient through.

“ If only she had more strength, more resisting power, I should have more hope. But the shock and the pain from the fractured limbs have drained her vitality.”

Desperately did the doctor and the nurses contend with the raging fever, and when after several days of delirious raving she became quiet and listless, the doctor gravely shook his head and whispered, “ The crisis is come, but I have little hope that she will pull through.”

It was then that the Commissioner rose to the full height of his Puritan faith. “ The Lord gave and the Lord can take away,” he whispered, “ and we must say, ‘ Blessed be the name of the Lord.’ But will He take her away from us? Has He not sent her to us, to nurse and train, and prepare for some special ministry in the Church? Was not that our belief when she

pledged herself in her baptism? Can it be that God would raise such expectation in our hearts and then so soon dash them to the ground? I believe that Grace will pass the crisis; I believe my child will live. But we must pray as well as believe."

For hours her life hung on a very slender thread. Anxiously the doctor and the parents watched the still white form. The pulse was scarcely perceptible, the breathing seemed entirely to have ceased. Was she gone? Was it only the cast-off garment of the child's soul they were so intently watching? Had she really passed beyond their reach? The parents could not speak their thoughts, but waited anxiously for the doctor's pronouncement. Then slowly he raised his head and whispered, "Thank God the crisis is over and Grace lives."

And Grace did recover, and many thanked God for the life that was, as the parents said, given a second time to them.

The period of convalescence was long and slow. The spinal trouble made itself more and more evident with every passing day. That affliction restricted her movements and made her dependent upon the assistance of her parents and friends. Though many prayers were offered up for the removal of this infirmity it gradually became clear to her that it was not the Lord's will. And that conviction made her wonderfully peaceful.

Finding her mother grieving over her, one day she said, "Mother dear, don't grieve because I shall always be a sufferer. I don't mind now, for I have heard God's voice saying, 'My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness,' and now I can say with Paul, 'Most gladly therefore will I rather glory

in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me'."

As soon as Grace was well enough to receive visitors, Edward and Kathleen were asked to see her in the room where all three had pledged themselves to life-long friendship.

Though so wasted by the fever there was about her face an indefinable charm and sweetness. The large glittering eyes were to Edward the shining lamps of her soul, which lighted her face with an almost supernatural glory. Kathleen and Edward were surprised to find her so full of spiritual ecstasy.

"You are very happy, Grace," said Edward.

"Yes, I am. I have been down in the dark, dark depths a second time, and God has brought me up and put a new song into my mouth, and now I want to praise Him for ever and ever." And turning her glowing eyes towards Edward, she said, "Edward, I see the light of a new joy in your face, and something in my heart tells me that you have passed your crisis and scored a great victory."

"I have, Grace, and I am now walking in the light of the Lord."

"Was it difficult to begin, Edward?" said Kathleen.

"No, not when I was convinced it was the only wise thing to do. My trouble was to fix the conviction. For one experience neutralised the other and left me in a state of indecision. But when all the evidences in favour of the Puritan Church formed themselves into a vision that came to me in Colonel Scroope's meeting, the effect was so convincing that my heart said, 'This is the way, walk in it.' And I have been walking in it with the Lord ever since."

This announcement of the triumph of grace gave unqualified pleasure to his two companions.

"But did you count the cost, Edward?"

"I did, Grace, and the price is manifold tribulation. I see the long dark way which lies ahead. But I also see Him who said, 'Take up thy cross and follow Me.' He will ever be in front, and so I follow on."

"And will you follow Him in baptism as Kathleen and I have done?" said Grace, looking Edward intently in the face.

"I am giving that sacred rite my most studious consideration. I am reading what the Lord saith about it, and praying to be shown what I ought to do. I find that not all the Puritans baptize their members. Colonel Scroope's Congregational Church does not, the Presbyterian Church and the Society of Friends do not, and neither does Mr. Ewins' Church baptize their members, though that magnificent woman, Dorothy Hazzard, was the first to be baptized by Mr. Kiffin. I am not a little perplexed by this diversity of practice amongst the Puritans, and therefore undecided. But as I have begun to walk in the way of the Lord, I am confident His Word will be a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my way, and in time this ordinance may become plainly my duty to observe."

Just then Selina entered the room with a tray of a new light refreshment called tea, a luxury drink obtained by pouring boiling water on the roasted leaves of an Asiatic plant which had quite recently been imported into England. Much was said about the merits of the beverage and its refreshing and stimulating properties.

Unlike the brewed drinks in general use, the new beverage did not inebriate.

It was very expensive, being £10 per pound, and only the well-to-do could afford the luxury. It was not a regular drink in the Commissioner's household, but this had been obtained for the benefit of the invalid. Grace and the party were full of praise for the "new wine," and expressed the hope that it might become cheaper, so as to displace the alcoholic liquors which were often more harmful than good.

Lionel looked in while "the cup that cheers" was being discussed, and taking a cup for himself, drank to the health of all in the room. He then announced that he was about to conduct the Mayor and the City Fathers over the Castle site, so as to determine the positions of the new streets, and to estimate the value of the new building sites.

"Grace, my child, I wish you could come with us, but if Kathleen and Edward could join us, they would be very interested."

"I cannot come, Daddy, but I would like Kathleen and Edward to go."

Readily the two young people consented, and joined the company. To Edward and Kathleen it was a most instructive excursion. The City Fathers were reminiscent. They dilated upon the special features of the old Castle—its age, its massive proportions, its impregnable character, its history and associations; they called back to mind the jollifications in the old Royalist days: the councils, the tournaments and grand receptions. They did not attempt to hide their pride in the old fortress, nor veil their displeasure with Cromwell for ordering so noble a castle to be demolished.

As they crossed from the Castle House to the middle of what is now Castle Street, Edward and Kathleen saw the entrance to the dungeon had been strongly arched

over. The dark chamber of horrors had been firmly sealed up with all its terrible secrets. Simultaneously their thoughts flew back to Grace whose earthly life had been marred by her fall into its horrible depths.

"You have sealed up the dungeon, Commissioner?" observed the Mayor.

"Yes, I want no other human being ever to fall into that inhuman habitation and suffer as my dear child will suffer all her life. And the building that will be erected over it will, I trust, obliterate all trace of it, so that with the passing years its very existence will be forgotten."

"We hope so too," replied the Mayor feelingly.

Very sincere were his expressions of sympathy for the Commissioner and his daughter, and very complimentary were his references to the intrepid young schoolmaster who went down into the dungeon to rescue the unfortunate maiden. Edward felt the touch of Kathleen's hand upon his arm, when these words were spoken, and though neither said anything with their lips, their hearts spoke and were understood.

When the tour of inspection was over the Mayor and the Commissioner went to the library in the Castle House to attend to certain business transactions, the Fathers returned to their homes, and Edward and Kathleen for the first time found themselves alone.

The spacious Castle site stretched away to the outer walls, which were left intact, to form henceforth a continuation of the city wall from the Newgate to the Old Market Gate, and from there to St. Peter's Church, in order to complete the circle of the city's defences.

It was a lovely summer's evening and the two young people felt a strange new joy in being left alone.

“Kathleen, have you ever walked round the outer walls of the Castle?”

“No, Edward.”

“Then shall we go round now and see the beautiful country that lies outside the city?”

Kathleen consenting, they took their first walk together. Beginning at the Newgate, they were soon standing on the wall above the Castle mill, still busy grinding corn, as the old creaking wheel turned beneath the weight of falling water from the moat, which then formed a broad weir. Looking down from the walls they saw the double-channelled From, coursing lazily through the broad meads bespangled with dwelling houses, which had not as yet formed themselves into the maze of roads and streets as at the present time. They saw the rosemary walks behind the ruins of the old monastery, and the beautiful gardens of Redcross Lane. They saw the wooded uplands of Kingsdown and Horfield and the winding road over St. Michael's Hill, Bristol's only roadway from the west, and the sinewy track which led over the Horfield Downs to the north.

Continuing their journey along the wall by the Castle ditch, which connected the River From with the Avon, they came to the Old Market Gate. From their vantage ground here they could command the Old Market, at that time an unpaved thoroughfare deep in mud, and watch the last of the traders leaving after a busy day. They saw the two pumps which then stood in the middle of the market, to which both man and beast came for the refreshing water; they saw the Pie Poudre Court which had been long established for the settlement of disputes between the buyers and sellers; they saw the stately villas on either side of the market,

the beginning of Bristol's villadom; the almshouses too, for aged widows and widowers, and which for many years then had been testifying to the generosity of a former Mayor and his good Dame Isabella. And at the top of the market they saw the Lawford's Gate, and near by the beautiful home of Kathleen's parents, and beyond nothing but the waving tree-tops of the Kingswood Forest, stretching away for miles as far as Pucklechurch.

Proceeding on their journey they came to the Queen's Bridge over the moat, and the long flight of steps which led down into the King's Orchard, then full of well-laden fruit trees.

From this point they had but a little way to go to complete their journey. As the wall here ran over the high cliff which ages before had been cut out by the River Avon, they obtained a more commanding view of the country to the south of the city.

They looked fondly upon St. Philip's Church, the cradle of Bristol Nonconformity; were interested in the leaning tower of Temple Church, and speculated as to whether it would ever fall. They turned admiring eyes towards that perfect gem of architecture, St. Mary Redcliffe Church, with its truncated tower, and marked the modesty of St. Thomas' Church rising but a few feet above the artisan dwellings of Thomas Street. They saw the outer wall of the city, and the Temple and Redcliffe Gates, through which travellers from east and south must pass ere they can come into the city. And away beyond they saw the marsh lands, the meadows and the wooded slopes that led to Knowle, the Dundry and the Clifton Downs.

It was an evening never to be forgotten. The air was clear and still, and every object before them was tinged

with the golden splendour of the westering sun. An indescribable peace filled the hearts of the lad and maiden as they stood and beheld the peaceful scene. The Castle, the symbol of grey old strife, lay shattered at their feet, but there in those sylvan glades beyond the city walls they saw the symbols of peace that renew their charm and beauty every spring-time, and bring peace to the heart of man.

In silence too deep for words they stepped down from the wall and returned to the Castle House. They had seen in vision cities without castles or walls, and the citizens all living in peace.

The tour became an outstanding landmark in the domain of memory. Years afterwards they recalled every step of the way, and when harassed and hunted and persecuted and compelled to seek the cover of those sylvan glades to worship God, they loved to recall the sense of peace they felt on that summer's evening when they took their first walk together on the battlemented walls of the demolished Castle.

CHAPTER XII

UNION IS STRENGTH

“ Sail on, O ship of state,
Sail on, O union strong and great,
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate.”
—*Longfellow.*

DURING the Civil War “ Associations ” were formed in different counties for mutual defence against Royalist plundering. These “ Associations ” came to be recognised by the Parliamentary Government and were mobilised to form the model army. It was in this association campaign that Oliver Cromwell showed himself an expert military organiser. By selecting the best men for the association and then uniting the associations in an army, he forged the instrument that defeated the King, and brought the Civil War to a successful issue. Co-operation was strength.

This method was adopted in Baptist circles, and the term “ association ” given to scattered churches agreeing to unite for mutual encouragement, counsel and help. One of the oldest of these associations was the Western, in which the Bristol Baptist Church was to take a leading part.

On the 3rd November, 1653, there was great excitement amongst the Baptists in Bristol. For on that day there assembled from places as distant as Ilston in South Wales, and Kingstanley, Gloucestershire, groups of horsemen who had been appointed by their respective churches to attend the first conference of the Association at Wells on November 6th.



Early in the morning the white sails of the *Flying Eagle* were seen from the Look-out Hill approaching the harbour. The sight was hailed with shouts of joy, mingled with prayers of gratitude and praise.

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The more distant visitors had been travelling several days, and had found what shelter they required for themselves and their horses at the wayside hostelries. All were tired and glad to receive the hospitality provided for them by the Bristol Church at the Dolphin Inn.

The first to arrive were the brethren from South Wales, who, having obtained a passage over the Severn near Aust in the morning, reached Bristol in the afternoon. A little later the Gloucestershire contingent arrived, and after seeing that their horses were well groomed and fed, proceeded to the delectations of the substantially furnished supper table.

Supper over, they drew up to the log fire burning brightly on the hearth, for there was a nip in the air which made the fire a welcome sight. The fire had a thawing effect upon the visitors. For while there had been correspondence between the churches they represented, with but one or two exceptions the delegates were total strangers to one another.

There was no attempt at sustained conversation at the supper table. The delegates were more intent on taking mental measurements of one another than talking. But now, drawn out by the kindly enquiries of their hosts, they began to relate their experiences by the way.

Goodman Apperly and Goodman Lusty of Kingstanley were sturdy champions of Baptist Nonconformity. They were neither lacking in mental culture nor in spiritual attainments. They were great-souled men, admirably suited for those stormy days.

Answering a question put by Henry Hynam, Goodman Apperly said : " The Royalists seem to be everywhere active and at times threatening. At some of the hostels we were treated with scant civility, and our

needs reluctantly attended to. We did not go out of our way to own our allegiance to the Great Protector, but whenever we were challenged, we were ready to declare our loyalty to the 'uncrowned king' of England.

"In crossing Millbury Heath we had an exciting adventure, for at the loneliest spot a company of horsemen sprang out upon us, and in the name of Prince Charles, 'the lawful King of England,' demanded our unconditional surrender.

"The ringleader of this company was a fierce-looking fellow with bullet head and large square jaw, who indulged in the most offensive language and threatened to shoot every one of us if we did not surrender.

"The outfit of the company was somewhat theatrical, as if they were only mimic soldiers, dressed up to take some part in a play. And their horses looked as if their fittest place was the knacker's yard. But whether these horsemen were Royalists or robbers we could not tell. But seeing that we were outnumbered, prudence dictated a speedy flight, and putting spurs to our horses, we dashed away and did not stop until we had left the heath, and these undesirable characters far behind."

"Brethren," said Lionel Wakefield, "you have been happily delivered from the most godless men in Bristol. That fierce-looking fellow, if I mistake not, was George Derville, an implacable enemy of dissent in this city, and I expect he had with him his incorrigible father and their gang of ruffians who are constantly disturbing our meetings.

"They had evidently heard of our conference at Wells, and in this way tried to prevent you attending. But God has frustrated their knavish trick."

John Myles of Ilston was unquestionably the leader of the deputation from the Principality. As a Govern-

ment Commissioner of Religion for South Wales he exercised great authority; and as the founder of the first Baptist Church in Wales he was greatly esteemed by his Baptist brethren. He was a man of deep learning and broad sympathies. As a Commissioner he did everything he could for his brethren in the Established Church, but as a Baptist by conviction, he sought and found a place in 1649 to erect a Baptist meeting-house, in which he and his Baptist friends formed a Baptist Church. This little church at Ilston was followed by others as the principles and practices of Baptists became more widely known.

The deputation from Wales encountered many difficulties on the way. Roving bands of Royalists challenged their advance at several places, but such was the esteem in which John Myles was held for bringing succour to the neglected Anglican Churches in Wales, that his presence in the company convinced the Royalists that their mission to England was ecclesiastical, and so they were allowed to pass in peace. Stormy weather and swollen streams added much to their discomfort, but undaunted they continued their course.

The recital of these difficulties was listened to with keen interest by the Bristol brethren, who then related the history of dissent in Bristol from the time Dorothy Hazzard and her four friends took their stand for a pure and unfettered Christian Church, and how God had led them by the visit of Mr. Kiffin, to accept the Baptist teaching and form themselves into a Baptist Church.

The visitors were delighted with the optimistic outlook of their Bristol brethren. But as they began to show in their weary eyes the need of "nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," Henry⁹ Hynam suggested that they should close their happy converse in family worship.

It was a fellowship of kindred minds, which, like an oasis in the desert, refreshed their souls for many days.

After a round of visits the next morning the visitors took lunch at the Castle House to which they had been cordially invited by the Commissioner and Selina. The dining room was spacious enough to accommodate the whole party.

Lionel and Selina and three of their children sat down with their guests at the table. The only child that was absent was Grace, who, though greatly improved in health, was still compelled to keep her bed.

There was no need to hurry over the meal, and the least disposed to do so were the children. They realised that this was a great occasion. The guests were most interesting. Their travel talks and adventures riveted the attention of the young people, and many thrilling tales of adventure were purposely related for their benefit.

Each guest became a hero in turn to these bright, intelligent children, but the hero who rose in their estimation above the others was John Myles, who during the conversation captivated their young hearts by saying, "Commissioner Wakefield, you have three most promising children here."

"Yes, Mr. Myles, and I believe they will be as good as they promise to be. They are all three safe within the fold. They are members of Pastor Hynam's catechumen class, but their principal instructor is the sweet little lady here they love to call their mother."

Selina's eyes sparkled at this affectionate allusion to herself by her husband, and the children smiled lovingly at their mother as their endorsement of their father's tribute.

"All my children are dear good children," said Selina. My eldest child has begun very early to carry her cross,

and will of necessity always remain at home to suffer and serve, but these three are adventurous spirits, whose youthful minds are ever roaming over the wide domains of the earth. What their respective spheres in life will be I cannot foresee, but if I interpret their aspirations aright, Bristol will not hold them for long ; but the one thing I feel sure of is that, wherever they go, they will be brave and true followers of Jesus Christ. Your travel talks and adventures will fire their imagination for many days to come, and, it maybe, help to direct their future ways.

“ Henry and Tom have been great stalwarts in the nursery for religious freedom, and their younger sister Muriel is every bit as fearless as they. They have been each committed to long terms of imprisonment, and even martyrdom at the stake, by one or the other of them acting as the judge, and I must say that though it was all in play, yet they addressed themselves to the ordeal with astonishing gravity and determination. As the child is father to the man, these children indicate the firm stand they will take in the stormy days that may yet sweep over our land. I trust the Lord will spare His Church another ordeal by fire, but ‘ if it must be that offences will come,’ my prayer is that my children may face the ordeal as unflinchingly as they do it now, in their play.”

At this outburst of maternal affection and solicitude all in the room looked admiringly at the children and exclaimed, “ Amen, the will of the Lord be done.”

John Myles voiced the feelings of all the guests by saying : “ We are proud to meet such promising recruits. There are other centres of religious activity besides Bristol where valiant men and women are needed to witness for God. Before another decade has passed the

storm may be upon us. Even New England does not offer the freedom that might be expected from rulers who once were the victims of religious intolerance in England. Roger Williams has been expelled from the Old Colony, Obadiah Holmes has been mercilessly flogged, and others similarly treated or fined because of their Baptist principles.

"It seems as if every man's hand is lifted against us, but the future lies with these young people, and if a generation of stalwarts arise, like what these three children promise to be, then before this stormy century has run its course, the flag of religious liberty will be unfurled to fly proudly and for ever above every religious meeting place in England and her colonies."

Then turning to Henry and Tom and Muriel he said : "God bless you, children, and keep you ever in His love, and crown your life's endeavour with glorious victory."

It was the benediction of a great soul, which the children never forgot.

During the afternoon the guests were taken to see Grace. Kathleen was sitting by her side, and joined in giving them a warm greeting.

By Grace's request they repeated much they had said to her brothers and sister in the dining room. Grace listened with joyous attention, and when they had finished she thanked them for their kindness and added : "And now may I ask you for another favour ? When you return to your homes will you write me sometimes about the progress of your respective churches ? And I will write you about our church life in Bristol. I am likely always to be an invalid, but I don't want to be a useless lump of a thing, always giving trouble, and never trying to lighten the troubles of others. Kathleen tells me all the happenings at our church, and if I

passed on this information to you, it would encourage your churches, as any information you might send on to me would encourage our church in Bristol."

John Myles thought this a brilliant idea. He complimented her on her readiness to step over the confines of self, in which so many were prone to tarry even in health, in order to help the small Baptist churches, which were struggling to let their light shine.

And so it was arranged that Grace, with Kathleen as her assistant, should be the official correspondent between the churches.

By a happy coincidence Edward Terrill arrived at the Castle House before the guests had left Grace's room.

"Oh, Edward," exclaimed Grace, these gentlemen are the deputations from Wales and Gloucestershire whom we were expecting. Let me introduce you to them as my deliverer, and as a recent convert to Puritanism."

She did so. In a few well chosen words she told the company how Edward rescued her from the dungeon, and how after much unbelief he had accepted the Puritan faith.

"We are delighted to meet you, Master Terrill," said John Myles, eyeing the comely youth with much satisfaction. "We hear you have recently put your hand to the plough of dissent in Bristol. This is a plough that rips up many fond attachments; but it is the plough that prepares the soil for the harvest. The plough cuts many furrows, but the harrows level and unify them, and make the surface one harvest-bearing field. Several furrows have already been cut in Bristol I find. There is the Baptist furrow, the Congregational furrow, and the Presbyterian and Quaker furrows, but all I trow are being levelled and unified by the harrows of grace, that they all may be one in producing the harvest of

precious souls. But it is essential that the furrow be deep and clean, if its yield of fruit is to be rich and plentiful. Which is the furrow, may I ask, that you are cutting, Master Terrill ? ”

This novel thrust at Edward's indecision, aroused his keenest interest.

“ A furrow, Mr. Myles, I see I must cut, if I am to do any lasting good for the Church. I see I must concentrate my energies in one definite direction. I wish there was only one furrow. But as it seems there must be many furrows and diversities of operations, I must make my choice. But turning from the figure of ploughing to that of milling the corn : I see that the water of a river may be so broadened out that it has no power to drive the mill wheel.

“ While I wish to cultivate broad and comprehensive sympathies with all sections of the Christian Church, I see that to become really effective in Church reform I must direct the river of my life into some deep channel, for only so can the Church wheel do its special work. What that channel will be, or, as you put it, what that furrow will be, I have not yet been able to decide. I am sufficiently convinced on the subject of believers' baptism to desire to be baptized, but I am not clear in my own mind why so many good and worthy men, who dissent from the Established Church on the ground of its unscriptural practices, yet carry with them the unscriptural practice of infant baptism. It is this phase of the subject I am now considering.

“ I am very much attached to the ministry of Mr. Ewins. On all questions, except baptism, he meets the requirements of my soul. I am a great admirer of Mrs. Dorothy Hazzard, that great-souled Christian, and fearless patriot, who is the leading member of Mr.

Ewins' church. I know that she and several others there have been baptized. But that does not make the church a Baptist church. Though I have been invited to have communion with Mr. Ewins' people, yet I hold that I ought to refrain until I have observed Christ's prior command concerning believers' baptism. I hear that Mr. Ewins and some of his officers are seriously considering the question of baptism. If they decide in its favour, and this body of dissenters becomes a Baptist church, my course will be clear, and I shall feel constrained to become a baptized member of this church. But until then, my furrow may remain uncut."

This frank and able statement of his position charmed and gratified all in the room. Grace and Kathleen were full of joyous pride. Edward was preparing himself for a complete surrender.

John Myles, voicing the feelings of the others, said: "Master Terrill, you have made a great speech, you have outlined a magnificent purpose, you will only stand where your God-enlightened conscience prompts you to stand, but having taken your stand there, I foresee that nothing, not even the threat of death, will cause you to swerve. God bless you, my son.

"Though you are not drawn to join the Baptist church to which these two dear girls belong, and their parents, and so many of your friends, yet I venture to predict that your strong and illuminating advocacy of Baptist principles will eventually lead Mr. Ewins and his people to constitute themselves a Baptist church."

Edward was visibly moved by the warmth of Mr. Myles' eulogium, and quietly added, "I pray to be guided."

CHAPTER XIII

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP

“Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein ;
And he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.”
—*Solomon.*

THE morning of November the fifth was dry and sunny. The delegates were early astir to see to the grooming and feeding of their horses, and to prepare themselves for their long journey.

Early as was the hour men and boys were busy fetching wood and dry leaves for the Guy Fawkes demonstration in the evening. Though Bristol had ceased to support the Royal House, yet it could not refrain from the pleasure the pyrotechnic displays gave them, of celebrating the timely deliverance of King James.

By nine o'clock the delegates at the Dolphin Inn were ready to start. A few minutes later Lionel, William Listun and Pastor Hynam, the Bristol delegates, rode up and greeted them.

Without any delay the company proceeded down Wine Street, then a residential thoroughfare, by the Guard House, the stocks and the city pump, which were adjacent to each other and formed an island in the middle of the street.

Everybody in the street eyed the horsemen with great curiosity. The Bristol delegates were recognised and greeted cheerily as old friends, but few could comprehend the mystery of such a cavalcade.

As they passed the narrow entrance to Mary-le-Port Street the sound of pawing horses led the Commissioner to look in that direction, and to his surprise saw two

mounted horsemen. Taking a second look at the riders he recognised George Derville and his father, the arch-enemies of dissent.

"What in the name of mischief are these two crafty lawyers after?" thought the Commissioner. Then he remembered the experience of the Gloucestershire delegates on Milbury Heath. Were these two men, and their gang of ruffians, out to molest them on the way? Or to spy upon their conference at Wells?

The Commissioner knew how deeply the clerical and Royalist party resented the policy of Cromwell; he knew also they were ever ready to undermine the Commonwealth and regain their old ascendancy.

Without appearing to recognise the spies, he led the company through the St. Nicholas Gate, over Bristol Bridge, along Thomas Street into Portwall Lane, and through the Temple Gate, into the main road which led to Wells. In a few minutes they were on the rising ground that led over the hill which stood as one of nature's outer ramparts of the city.

When they reached Knowle they halted to view the beautiful landscape. It was a lovely sight which caught their eyes. In the bright morning sun, Bristol, the city of churches and quaint fifteenth century buildings, down in the vale, engirdled by its rivers, its battlemented walls, its undulating hills mantled with trees that still carried their autumn-tinted foliage, looked like a silver crown, lying in a basket of golden chrysanthemum blooms.

As they lingered to admire the scene before them they saw emerging from the Temple Gate two horsemen who took the road which led in their direction.

The Commissioner was the first to speak. "Friends, these two horsemen, even if there are no more, may

prove undesirable companions. They are George Derville and his father, who were in the company which threatened your Kingstanley delegates on Milbury Heath. They are now probably employed by our adversaries to spy on our movements at Wells. Though we shall do and say nothing that will incriminate us, yet we shall need to observe great caution."

"Good morning, neighbours," said the Commissioner, addressing the two men as they drew near. "You are taking the road early this morning, and travelling with great speed. I hope there is nothing amiss."

"No," drawled out George Derville, senior. "The boy and I thought we would take a run in the country. It is weeks since we had a good airing together."

"Then you have no urgent business on hand?"

"Nothing more than a canter to Wells and back to see how our two colts take the saddle. They are lively creatures and require a lot of breaking in."

No one with any casual acquaintance with horses would have suspected that these needed such a journey to test their mettle. They certainly were not colts. But there was something in the tone of voice and in the lurking smile upon the young man's face, which confirmed the Commissioner in regarding them as spies.

"Then if time is no object to you and your son, Mr. Derville, we beg the favour of your company. But as some of my friends are advanced in years, we must take the journey steadily."

The invitation was accepted with a great show of cordiality, but not without some misgivings amongst the delegates.

Taking another look at the beautiful landscape, the horses were turned and the journey renewed. The Commissioner kept the Dervilles close to his side, by a

running conversation on trivial matters relating to the city. But after Whitchurch was passed, the delegates began discussing theological questions, the political situation, and the progress of the Fifth Monarchy Movement.

Though the horsemen rode in separate groups they were near enough for anyone who wished to catch occasional words and phrases spoken by the others.

The Commissioner observed that whenever ecclesiastical and political questions were being discussed, the spies were more attentive to this than to anything he was saying.

When the Fifth Monarchy question was being discussed, they were all ears to catch every word.

"I cannot think," said John Myles, "that the time is ripe for such a Monarch to come."

"Neither do I," rejoined Henry Hynam.

"But," said Goodman Apperly, "I am told He will be our King very shortly."

"Yes," replied John Myles, "and for that reason many are glad that Cromwell despatched King Charles, and affirm that Cromwell's days are numbered, and that as soon as he is out of the way the King will come."

"I am sure the King will be given a tremendous welcome," said Henry Hynam.

"There's no doubt about it," observed John Myles, "and I for one will give Him my most loyal allegiance."

"Well," said Mr. Hynam, "the question is to be discussed at Wells, and we shall be asked to record our opinions."

This is the purport of what, in many disconnected words, the spies were able to pick up. They exchanged significant glances, which the Commissioner did not fail to observe.

When the company halted at Paulton for luncheon, the spies went on to Wells, to find out where the conference was to be held.

They were highly gratified with their morning's work. They had discovered a hotbed of treason. George Derville recalled what Robert Slyman had written from London, and here was a striking confirmation of his report. Though the Dervilles nor their patrons had any love for Cromwell, yet it would serve their purpose, by pretending to be loyal to Cromwell, to prove these dissenters guilty of treason.

At Wells they found a sheltered corner near the cross-roads, where they could see all who came to the conference, without being seen.

They had not been there long before they saw a group of horsemen who had come from Salisbury, Dorchester and Chard. A few minutes later others arrived from Cirencester and Bourton-on-the-Water. These were soon followed by a large company from Taunton, Bridgwater and Wedmore.

After a considerable wait a small contingent arrived from the neighbouring village of Crosscombe. Then there was another long wait, and had it not been that the Bristol company had not arrived, the spies would have concluded there were no more to come.

But while they waited for their coming, a very large company came into the city from Plymouth, Dartmouth, Tiverton, and Loughwood. In the forefront of this contingent was a man of striking personality, who was unquestionably the leader. This was Thomas Collier. They, like the other companies, were met by guides who took them to the meeting place at the White Pelican hostelry.

Still the spies waited for the Bristol contingent, and when at length it arrived saw that it had been increased by delegates from the Paulton Church.

They stepped back into their corner so as not to be seen, when to their surprise the Commissioner, not noticing any guide, turned the wrong way and passed them. Very quickly the guide turned the company back, and while doing so, the Commissioner caught sight of the crafty spies, who, disconcerted by this unexpected exposure, nevertheless brazened it out with an ostentatious salutation.

Thomas Collier, the convener of the conference, was a great pamphleteer, open-air preacher and church organiser. He was the Superintendent of the Western Churches. He travelled widely as an evangelist and dotted the country with Baptist churches. As an army chaplain he induced the Baptists while in camp to form themselves into churches, and many churches in England, Scotland and Ireland were formed in this way.

Thomas Collier was in his element as President of the Conference. He was in turn genial, humorous, grave, thoughtful, fervent and enthusiastic, a man with a burning passion for souls, and one who made his passion contagious.

The two great controversial subjects of the conference were : " The Seventh Day Observance " and the " Fifth Monarchy " idea of Daniel. Both questions were fully discussed and finally rejected.

The first day of the week had been observed as the Lord's Day from earliest Christian times, and no useful purpose would be served by shifting back to the seventh day.

In regard to the " Fifth Monarchy " idea, Christ was said to be that Monarch who was expected shortly to

return to the earth and reign as King. The "days" in Daniel were interpreted to give the exact time of His coming, and that time was close at hand. The death of Charles the First cleared the way for this Divine King. But would not the presence of Oliver Cromwell as virtual King retard the coming of Christ? It is true that in some parts of the country there were individuals who believed this and plotted to get Cromwell out of the way, but there is no evidence that such plotters were amongst the delegates at Wells.

"There is no proof," said the President when winding up the discussion, "that Daniel's prophecy is rightly interpreted. And there is no scriptural warrant for making political preparations for the coming of the King. No one knows, not even the angels, when He will come. And the only preparation that is required is the individual preparation of heart and mind."

But as the "pros and cons" were considered by the delegates, an occasional listener might get the idea that some attempt was being made to depose the Protector and put some other potentate in his place. And that was the impression two minstrel attendants received as they caught mischievous scraps of the discussion.

When all the delegates were settled in the White Pelican, these two strolling minstrels entered the inn yard, and began playing lively airs upon reed instruments.

"Poor fellows," exclaimed the Commissioner, "they are good players, though they look so desitute." And passing round a plate the delegates gave very generously to the players.

But as the presence of so many guests entailed much work, the landlord seized the opportunity of engaging the minstrels to help his servants during the two days'

conference. And it was while they were so occupied they became convinced of the treasonable character of the assembly.

When the delegates were leaving the hostelry for their return journey, they expressed a wish to say good-bye to the minstrel attendants and to thank them for their amiable service. But they were nowhere to be found. No one had seen them since they went to their room overnight. And when this room was entered it was found that the bed had not been slept in during the night. What did this portend? Why had they so strangely disappeared, and without their wages? Who could they be? Though no one could answer the question, no one worried about it, for it was nobody's business but their own.

With cheery words of fraternal greeting those who had to take different roads bade farewell to each other. Those who could, travelled as far as possible together, before they separated.

At Paulton the Bristol contingent parted with the last of their companions and set out for home feeling very elated by all the soul-stirring experiences at the conference. They were full of praise for Thomas Collier. That great apostle of the West had completely captivated their imagination; his learning, zeal and lovable character made him an ideal leader. He had arranged to visit every church during the coming year, and great things were expected.

The morning was somewhat misty, so that even near objects appeared indistinct. As the delegates rode and talked they did not see or hear a company of horse soldiers approach them from a side road until they were almost upon them.

The Commandant rode forward and commanded the delegates to halt, and then informed them they were under arrest.

"Arrest," exclaimed the Commissioner. "By whose authority and for what reason?"

"My authority is this warrant, and the charge is that of treason against his Excellency the Lord Protector and his Government. A clear charge of treason has been lodged against you, and it is our duty to escort you to Bristol as prisoners when the charge will be carefully investigated."

"Treason?" exclaimed John Myles. "Treason? what do you mean by treason?"

"It is not for me to argue," said the Commandant. "It is my duty to execute my orders."

"But who could bring such a charge against us?" asked the Commissioner.

"These two honourable gentlemen who have guided us to you, have informed against you, and will witness against you in Bristol. It is my duty to take you there without delay. Soldiers, march."

In another moment the delegates were riding on as prisoners surrounded by a company of Cromwell's soldiers. The Commissioner eyed the two "honourable gentlemen" alluded to by the Commandant and then smiled. There was something about the two "honourable gentlemen" which reminded him of the two strolling minstrels at the White Pelican, and also of the two horsemen who had journeyed with them from Bristol, and turning to them he said, "Neighbours, what trick is this?"

The two spies, for it was they, did not condescend to answer, but looked immensely satisfied over the capture they had effected.

The journey to Bristol was full of suspense to the delegates. They had no idea of the nature of the charge that was to be made against them. They rode in pairs, with an armed soldier on either side. Though they were free to speak they felt that silence was the best policy, lest some word might be misconstrued.

The Commandant was a stranger to the Commissioner, and as that officer felt the gravity of the charge against the prisoners, he had no desire to enter into conversation with them. And so for the most part it was a silent procession that came into the city.

There was surprise and consternation when the prisoners were recognised by the gatekeepers and other citizens at the gates. The news of their arrest spread rapidly through the city, so that a large crowd watched the handing over of the prisoners to the Mayor, who was commanded to keep them in safe custody until they were tried.

"But what is the charge against them?" demanded the Mayor.

"Treason."

"Treason! And who makes the charge or informs against them?"

"These two honourable gentlemen," pointing to the Dervilles.

The Mayor demanded on what evidence they preferred such a charge.

Then with an air of much self-importance, the two spies told what they had overheard when travelling with the prisoners to Wells, and what they heard when acting as minstrels and waiters at the inn.

"Why, men," exclaimed the Mayor, "you must be fools to take a molehill for a mountain, and to charge the ways of God to mortal man. If the King of whom

they spoke came, then all the kings of the earth must give way to Him. Neither Cromwell, nor Prince Charles, nor any other potentate could say 'Nay' to Him. These men have only been airing their religious notions. They have not been plotting, as you suppose, against our illustrious Lord Protector. They are his most loyal supporters, as we all know full well in this city. I am not able to accept their prophetic beliefs in the near coming of this Monarch, but I acquit them of any charge of treason, and declare them, in the presence of their fellow-citizens, free men.

"Treason—real treason—I will put down with the utmost rigour of the law, but this is not treason, and I advise you two informers to be more careful in the future, lest your false zeal brings you into trouble."

The Commissioner thanked the Mayor for his timely intervention, and said, that though amongst them at the conference, there were some who spoke very confidently about the immediate coming of the King-Lord, yet the conference did not endorse the belief, nor would they make any political preparation for such an event.

The unfortunate incident would then have ended, if the citizens had not interposed. They were annoyed that such worthy men as the Commissioner and his friends should have been put to such inconvenience by two such rascals as the Dervilles, who they knew were in the pay of the priests and the Royalists, and would do anything to overthrow Cromwell and the dissenters, that they demanded summary punishment for the misguided spies.

"Put them in the stocks—the stocks; put them in the stocks," shouted the crowd, ever ready to clamour for a popular verdict.

In vain did the Commissioner interpose to save them from this ordeal. The excited crowd would not be pacified.

“The stock, the stocks. Put the villains in the stocks.” The clamour was so strong that the Mayor was compelled to yield, and so they were committed to the stocks in Wine Street for two hours, and warned that if their indiscretions ever troubled honest citizens again they would be sent to prison.

While the crowd, with grim humour, witnessed the execution of the sentence on the two unhappy men, and supplemented the ordeal by hurling derisive epithets and highly offensive missiles at the miscreants, as was the custom of an unsympathetic crowd at that time, the delegates withdrew to the Castle House, where a sumptuous meal was quickly served, and where a happy company thanked God that the evil design of evil men had been so speedily frustrated.

CHAPTER XIV

AT LONG LENGTH

“ He fought his doubts, and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them ; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own,
And power was with him in the night
Which makes the darkness and the light
And dwells not in the light alone.”

—*Tennyson.*

THE conference at Wells sent reverberations throughout the West Country, but nowhere were the results more marked than in Bristol.

The conference showed the strength and vitality of Baptist Nonconformity, the pitfalls to be avoided, the points of advantage to be stressed to make the Baptist Church a great spiritual power for the evangelising of England.

In the following year, Thomas Ewins, and his principal elder, John Purnell, brought to an end their long deliberations on the subject of baptism, and were baptized. Dorothy Hazzard was manifestly pleased, and viewed with more hopefulness than ever the time when her fellow-worshippers would definitely form themselves into a Baptist Church.

Many were the appeals she made to Edward Terrill to come and join them. She was confident that if Edward was baptized, his influence would be decisive in bringing the members over into the Baptist fold.

Convinced at last of his duty, Edward decided to be baptized, and a date was fixed in 1655. But unfortunately a book was put into his hand on the eve of his baptism, which unsettled him, and he postponed the ordinance until all his doubts had been fought and conquered. It was a dreary time of uncertainty for another three years, but it was well worth while. In fighting his doubts he gathered strength, and more fully equipped himself for service.

In 1658 the long-drawn-out soul-conflict ended. In that year Edward Terrill was baptized, and in the same year the first group of Nonconformists in Bristol became a Baptist Church with open membership. Not as yet had it found its home in Broadmead, but now that it had definitely declared itself a Baptist Church, henceforth in this story it will be called the Broadmead Church.

Edward Terrill's baptism was witnessed by an immense crowd. And when this highly cultured young schoolmaster was led down into the river, it was felt that a great champion had been won for the Church of God. The rumblings of the coming storm were being heard in Bristol. Storm clouds were seen rising on the political horizon. But in this young scholar, with the judicial mind of a lawyer, and the commanding power of a general, the church felt they had a rock of defence.

Among the crowd of spectators were Dorothy Hazzard, who was full of spiritual exaltation; the Listun and Wakefield families; Andrew Gifford, and the inevitable spy on all Free Church movements in Bristol—George Derville. But what gave Edward the sweetest satisfaction was the presence of Grace and Kathleen. It was the first time since her own baptism, five years before, that Grace had gone so far. She was unable to

walk and was more or less a recumbent sufferer, but when bolstered up with pillows she could sit for a little while.

Her soul was full of rapture at the sight of Edward's baptism. She had often prayed that it might happen. In his many visits during her long illness, she had often discussed the subject with him, but she was quick to perceive that until he was convinced in his own mind he would not observe the ordinance. But when convinced he would be a very giant in determination to obey his Lord's command. This feeling was equally shared by Kathleen. No other young man filled their world like Edward. He was to them a brother beloved in the true Christian sense.

Grace's wish to witness the baptism found an echo in the heart of Kathleen. Their parents and brothers and sisters fell in with the desire, and so it came about that Grace was carefully lifted into a carriage and taken to the service. The other occupants of her carriage being Kathleen and Bessie Atkins the nurse.

The crowd listened with rapt attention to the eloquent discourse of Mr. Ewins, who spoke with great conviction on the value of believers' baptism, as denoting a distinct break from the world by the candidate.

"Nothing can more strikingly symbolise the death of the soul to its worldly ambitions and ways than the water which buries the candidate for a moment ; or the resurrection of the soul to a new life than when the watery grave opens and the candidate returns to live the Christian life. In this watery grave to-day all that is worldly in the soul of Edward Terrill is represented as being buried, and from this watery grave to-day, all that is Christian in the soul of Edward Terrill is represented as coming forth to show itself, in every way the

Lord will require of him. He will live amongst us as one who has come back from the grave and whose new and risen life will be lived with Christ in God.

“Whatever demands may be made upon him, in the coming evil days, he will not falter nor fail, for I perceive that the Spirit of God is upon him. He will bring new life to our little community, but his heart is big enough to champion the rights of every Christian community, and the Free Churches of Bristol will have occasion to bless God for the consecration this day of Edward Terrill to his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.”

There was intense silence as the water closed over the young convert. Many were moved even to tears. Even George Derville could not restrain a regret that his services to the priests must bring him into opposition to such a sterling young fellow.

The baptism of Andrew Gifford some few weeks later was, in many ways, as notable as that of Edward Terrill. He was the son of poor parents with no educational advantages. But ever since his conversion, he had shown himself a most pious and thoughtful lad. His prayers at the devotional meetings were intensely earnest, clear in expression, and full of scriptural allusions. Though he was only sixteen years of age, yet his discourses at the meetings were remarkable for the knowledge they displayed of the Word of God, and his grasp of theological questions. A prophet, it was felt, was growing up amongst them, and the members prayed that he might increase in knowledge and wisdom and spiritual understanding, and, God willing, live to become their teacher and pastor.

Andrew Gifford's baptism was doubly interesting to Grace and Kathleen because their brothers and sisters were baptized at the same time, thus completing the

consecration of the two families to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Hynam was visibly impressed by this promising company of young people consecrating their lives to the service of Jesus Christ. He enforced the lessons of the ordinance, and exhorted the candidates to keep faithful in the midst of a wicked and adulterous generation.

"I pray that every one of you will stand the fire of persecution that is close upon us. Andrew, my son in the faith, I look to you to be instant in season and out of season ; to be ready at all times to speak and to act in defence of your Free Church principles, and ever to proclaim the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. The days of my life are rapidly slipping away. I shall not see the evil times that are coming, but when the mantle of my ministry falls across your youthful shoulders, it will be given to you to lead the church safely through its long Gethsemane of sorrow, into a triumphal freedom and peace. Therefore, my son, 'be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.' And what I say to you, Andrew, I say to all your companions : watch and pray."

It was a touching and memorable scene. The old minister and the young convert, who would one day be his illustrious successor, standing together in the river.

"Andrew," said Mr. Hynam with a tremulous voice, "I must decrease but thou wilt increase, and thy light will shine more and more unto the perfect day of religious freedom in England."

Bristol was richly blest in having two such young men as Edward Terrill and Andrew Gifford. The first immortalised Broadmead and the second the Pithay Church, though not as yet had it moved into that part of the city.

And now an incident must be related which confirmed the fears of the aged minister. A few evenings after his baptism, Andrew Gifford and Edward Terrill were walking through St. James' Barton on their return journey from a preaching service at Westerleigh. They were talking seriously about a rumour they had just heard, namely, that all the dissenting places of worship in Bristol were to be closed and the dissenters compelled to go to church.

"That will not be a great misfortune," said Andrew Gifford, "if all the churches are staffed with ministers like Thomas Ewins, and all the members are free to follow the directions of God's Word, and the dictates of conscience, as we do now. For since Cromwell has been in authority the church services have been very similar to our own."

"That is so," said Edward Terrill gravely, "but circumstances are altering. Cromwell is on the point of death, and cannot help us. The Presbyterians are pressing for the ascendancy. There is a division in the ranks of the Commonwealth leaders, and the Anglicans are seizing this opportunity to regain their authority in the State and in the Church. And if they do, their first act will be the curtailment of our liberties. At whatever cost we must maintain our liberties, and scriptural form of worship."

At this point their conversation was stopped by the wild ejaculations of a drunken man who was being led to his home in the Barton.

"Dissenters! Down with the dissenters! Close the conventicles! Smash their buildings as we smashed Dorothy Hazzard's! Down, down, down with all the dissenters!" The speech was incoherent, wildly delivered, between the hiccoughs of the drunken man, but the import was not lost on the two young men.

"Why, it is George Derville," said Edward, as they came near enough to recognise the man. "He has evidently been primed by his masters, the wily priests, and those crafty City Fathers, who for years have been waiting for an opportune moment to strike. Their hour is coming, if it has not already come, and we must stand firm. George Derville is a servile slave to the priests, and to make matters worse, is developing an abnormal taste for spirituous liquors. He will be the ready instrument of the priestly castigation which we may soon expect."

Just then the drunken fellow caught sight of Edward, and renewed his ravings against the dissenters.

"That's one of them; bind him, fling him into jail."

"Hush," cried his companions, "you will get there yourself if you rave like this."

Derville was madly intoxicated with the wine with which he had been primed, and his friends were trying to get him home as quickly as possible.

"I am sorry for his young wife," remarked Edward. "They have not long been married, and I am told he is very brutal towards her when he is intoxicated. She comes of a good family, is deeply religious, and is wonderfully patient with him. See, here she comes to the door to receive her drunken partner."

The house in the Barton, where the Dervilles lived, was the old farm house, which had domiciled many generations of farmers, but was now, as the brass plate on the front door indicated, in the possession of "George Derville, Junior, Attorney."

Very gently did the sorrowful wife receive her husband, and thanking the men for bringing him home, she closed the door upon another chapter of domestic infelicity.

CHAPTER XV

HELPMEETS

"Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from night.
O Father, touch the East and light
The light that shone, when hope was born."
—*Tennyson.*

IF knowledge of each other's antecedents is considered necessary for any young couple, wishing to make a wise marriage union, then the young people, whose life-story is here related, were amply supplied with that commodity.

They had grown up together, and knew each other's aims and habits of life. In their earlier years they were free and happy, and would romp and play without the slightest embarrassment. But with the dawn of adolescence they became amusingly coy and awkward towards one another, and would seldom avail themselves of an opportunity to be alone. Often did the parents smile at their children's coyness, but wisely refrained from making any observation, for they saw behind the mask of reserve the rising springs of genuine affection.

It is always a beautiful thing to witness a girl's maidenly reserve, tinged with the bloom of the rose-tinted blush, and the bashful youth, full of the charm of a strange new passion, timorously halting as they approach each other with the tender and sacred gift of love.

The issues are so momentous that nature has decreed that lovers shall be drawn towards each other by their

mutual affinities, and that the contract of marriage shall never be forced by the coarse conventions of man.

It was therefore no surprise to anyone when, at the end of their adolescence, Maurice Listun told Muriel Wakefield that he loved her as no other young man ever loved a lady since the creation of the world ; nor was it any surprise when Tom Wakefield professed his undying affection for Margaret Listun.

But when Rebecca Farren responded to the loving overtures of Gerald Listun there was surprise, because Rebecca had most emphatically declared her intention to live and die "an old maid." "But there," said the old folk, "you can never tell what ladies will do until they have done it."

Harry Wakefield cast admiring eyes upon Kathleen Listun, and many and various were the attempts he made to win that noble-hearted young lady. Kathleen's reply was very kindly given. "I like you, Harry, but I do not love you, and I could not marry anyone whom I did not love."

Harry was sorely disappointed, but eventually he chose Christ for his bride, and choosing Him chose a cross with piercing nails and cruel thorns.

Andrew Gifford carried the laurels of bachelorhood several years after he had left his 'teens. "I have no time," he would humorously say to his bantering friends, "to pay court to any lady. I have to make good the education I lacked in my childhood. When I am ready the lady will be there to greet me." But all his friends knew that there was only one lady in the whole wide world who would be Andrew's bride, and she was Hannah Brown, a beautiful young lady of Andrew's age, and as modest, discreet and wise as she was beautiful.

Hannah and Andrew had the fullest confidence in each other. Though no word of love had ever been spoken between them, yet there was a tacit understanding which showed itself in many little ways, that neither would seek, or wish to seek, the realisation of self apart from the other.

When they decided to take up the cross of Christ and to show evidence of their faith in the waters of baptism, it was to each other they first made known their intention. And when Andrew gave his first address in the meeting house, there was no more attentive and appreciative listener than Hannah. In adjacent homes, in St. James' parish, they grew side by side, the sapling oak and the tender vine, and in time Hannah became Andrew's loving bride, the devoted mother of his children, and his loyal and cheery helpmate throughout their long and chequered married life.

Edward Terrill's affection for Kathleen Listun grew steadily with the passing years. They frequently met each other, either in the meeting house, in Kathleen's home, or by the couch of their mutual and self-effacing friend, Grace Wakefield. Edward's charming manners, keen intellectual attainments and deep religious fervour gave him an *entrée* into the homes of the most influential citizens in Bristol. But nowhere did he feel so much at home as when at the Castle House or the Lawford's Lodge. In these homes there was more in common between Edward and the occupants. The religious tie was strong and sacred. With marvellous strength of purpose Edward resolved to control and conceal his affection for Kathleen until he had finished his apprenticeship and made his position in the school quite secure. That he felt was only fair to a lady so beautiful,

so affectionate, so thoughtful, and so well-connected as Kathleen Listun.

Good fortune had thrown them much together, and if in the providence of God Kathleen should ever become his bride, he knew that in temporal things he was likely to receive far more than he was ever likely to give. But even if that were not so, he desired, above all things else, to be worthy of such a good and conscientious woman.

It was a lovely afternoon in June, 1658, when a message from Grace Wakefield invited Edward to accompany her and Kathleen to the Listun's country residence at Lawford's Gate.

Edward readily responded to Grace's invitation, and at the appointed time he drove Grace and Kathleen from the Castle House, over what still remained of the Castle green, through the Newgate, and down the steep slope which led by the Castle Mill to the Broad Weir. Here the road passed between the two channels of the From, one of which received the surplus water of the moat as it flowed over the weir.

As the trio descended the slope they became aware that a crowd of people had assembled at the other end of the weir, near the ducking stool, which for many years had stood there on the bank of the river as a warning to scolding housewives.

Some poor unfortunate woman, who had been declared guilty of this heinous offence by her lordly husband, was now paying the penalty of her besetting sin. Tied to a stool, which was fixed to the end of a long plank, that swung round on a swivel, she was being ducked or submerged a given number of times, to her own evident distress, and the amusement of the giggling crowd of sightseers.

As the carriage drew near, Edward discovered that the screaming woman was the young wife of George Derville, who with stony callousness stood watching his wife's distress, and would make no sign to stay the execution of the penalty until she repented and begged to be forgiven. Derville recognising Edward and his companions, signed to the crowd to make way for the carriage to pass through.

"George Derville," said Edward in passing, "you are very young to make a spectacle of your domestic troubles in this ignoble way. Know you not that married life is for worse as well as better, and if you do not think it necessary to make an exhibition of your wife's virtues (and surely she must have many), why should you call attention in this unseemly way to a manifestation of weakness liable to an overwrought woman?"

"Besides, George Derville, I know you. Are you always such a sweet-tempered, amiable and lovable individual as never to provoke your wife to expostulate with you and give you her candid opinion? Do not your drinking habits sorely try the patience as well as the love of your good wife? Married life, George Derville, is a process of give and take, and if you are not prepared to take offence, then you should not give offence. Bear and forbear are excellent family pets that need no chain to hold them in, and which neither bite nor snap. Be a man, George, and stop this disgusting exhibition, and take your wife back into the bosom of your affection, and you will find that she will do you good and not evil all the days of your life."

George Derville ground his teeth at this unexpected castigation. He would like to have retaliated, but knowing the position Edward occupied in the city, and

remembering his experience in the stocks, he thought it best not to argue, and so, turning away, he growled out something which Edward took to mean, "She shall have every ducking that is ordered, and I will make her go through it every time she carries on her tantrums with me."

"George Derville is hopeless," sighed Edward to his two sympathetic friends, as the carriage proceeded on its way. He could do no more for the woman than he had done, but he resolved that he would do his utmost to persuade the City Fathers to stop such a degrading custom as would ill-become a community of debased and ignorant savages.*

Grace and Kathleen were full of grief for the poor woman, for they too knew that George Derville was very rough and ill-behaved towards her. They were elated over the stern rebuke Edward gave the brutal husband, and hoped it might have a salutary effect in improving his ways at home.

The carriage wended its way through Ellbroad Street, whose spacious houses were occupied by city officials; along Redcross Lane, between gardens rich with the glory and perfumes of flowers, and by a winding path came to the Lawford's Gate, and to the broad drive which led up to the front door of Lawford's Lodge, Kathleen's home.

William and Martha Listum were at the door to receive the visitors, and behind them stood their two handsome sons, Maurice and Gerald, and their sweet-faced daughter, Margaret. Very carefully was Grace lifted from the carriage and placed in a lounge chair beneath a

* "One of the latest instances of the use of the ducking stool in this country was in 1719, when a Bristol woman was 'ducked' because she had a scolding tongue."—John Sawyer's "The Story of Gloucestershire," p. 172.

magnificent cedar, which rose from the centre of a large and well-trimmed lawn, surrounded by beds of the choicest flowers in full bloom. To Grace, who seldom went beyond the confines of the Castle green, it was a veritable paradise.

"Oh, Kathleen, what a lovely place this is," said the invalid. "No wonder you are so happy, and have grown so beautiful since you came here to live."

"I am no judge of beauty," observed the modest Kathleen, "but as to being happy, I cannot help being that, because God is so good to me." And as she spoke, Edward thought she had never looked so lovely in all the years he had known her.

After tea had been served, the gentlemen enjoyed a game of bowls, while Martha and the girls talked together, for Grace's benefit, in the cool shade of the spreading cedar tree.

When the game was finished in an actual win for William Listun and Edward, but as Maurice and Gerald humorously remarked "in a moral victory for them," Mr. Listun announced that he and his two sons had to leave for important business in the city. They bade Grace and Edward "Good-bye," and expressed the hope that Grace would be none the worse for the journey, and that she would soon favour them with another visit.

The ladies had thoroughly enjoyed their talk, while the game was being played, for Grace was a most original and entertaining conversationalist. She never lacked something to talk about, and invested every subject with such charm and interest that her hearers never grew weary.

When Mr. Listun and the lads had left the garden, Grace began to expatiate on the variety of flowers and trees she saw growing all around her, and turning to her

devoted friend she said, " Kathleen dear, could you not take Edward round the garden while your mother and sister and I stay here and chat together? I am sure Edward would like to see over it."

A slight tinge of colour mounted to Kathleen's face at this suggestion, but she could not say " Nay." And so it transpired that Kathleen and Edward walked alone along the quiet secluded paths of the most beautiful garden in Bristol. They tried to say something about the glories of the garden, but their tongues were tied. There was only one subject about which they could speak, or rather think, and that was the deep heart love which each bore for the other and which had never been expressed in any word.

They were drawing near to the most sheltered part of the garden, when Edward, taking his companion's hand very gently in his own, said: " Kathleen, I love you."

" Yes, Edward, I know you do, your eyes have told me that for years, and Edward, there is no one in all this great, wide world that I can love but you."

" Oh, Kathleen, have you really seen my love blazing in my eyes, and yet have never betrayed such knowledge by any sign? "

" Edward, I have known and I have loved, and I have waited, and had you never spoken of your love to me, I should have loved and loved and loved for ever."

There was no need for further words. They took each other in one long and silent embrace, and as their lips met, in a speechless vow, they plighted their troth for better, for worse, throughout time and eternity.

It was a moment of exquisite rapture. And when they walked back to the cedar tree, with their arms linked together and their faces radiant with love, it

needed no words to tell Grace, Mrs. Listun and Margaret that they were the two happiest persons on earth.

Martha Listun and Margaret signified their pleasure by kissing the happy pair, and Grace could not have been happier if she herself had been Edward's choice. She, dear young suffering soul, had realised for years past that wedded love and happiness would never be her portion. She quietly bowed to the inevitable as the will of God. In lieu of wedded happiness for herself, to see Edward and Kathleen mated as husband and wife had been her dream and prayer, and now they had plighted their troth, her cup of joy was full.

"Edward and Kathleen," said Grace, "I have loved you both as only a sister can love, and as such I shall love you always, and wish you every joy. Your love for each other will, I am sure, never preclude some little love for me, who always desire to remain your well-wishing friend."

There were tears of real sorrow in Kathleen's eyes as she leaned down and kissed her noble-hearted companion, and realised, as never before, that no joy akin to her own could ever come to her suffering friend.

"We will ever love you, Grace, as our dearest sister."

"Yes," said Edward, as he gently raised her hand to his lips, "we will ever be your affectionate brother and sister."

There was great rejoicing over Edward's engagement to "The Glover's" eldest daughter. And many were the congratulations Edward and Kathleen received from their numerous friends.

The wedding was not long deferred. And thanks to Cromwell's legislation it was solemnised in the Pithay Meeting House.

In glorious sunshine the bridal party left the meeting house and went to the home of Kathleen's girlhood in Corn Street, and there for many years Edward and Kathleen lived their happy wedded life.

In due course the other young couples followed their example, and made homes for themselves in the new houses in Castle Street. The last to do so were Andrew Gifford and Hannah Brown. The long and careful nursing of their early friendship at last bore fruit in an open avowal of love which did not surprise anyone. It was a real love match, and what is real is natural. Nature blessed these two lovers with perfect affinities, and through all the eventful years that followed, they pulled together like the stronger and weaker oxen at the plough, and no soil was ever better cultivated and no flock of God more faithfully tended by any pastor and his wife, than the Pithay Baptist Church, Bristol.

No wedding bells were rung when these young people ventured forth on their matrimonial voyage, for they had left the churches with the belfries for the plain and despised meeting houses. But far better than metallic bells were the joy-bells ringing in their souls, for when the storm of persecution broke, and the hurricane swept them into gloomy prisons, these ever accompanying bells continued their joyous refrains.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RUMBLING OF THE STORM

“When the storms of life are raging,
Tempests wild on sea and land ;
I will seek a place of refuge,
In the hollow of God’s hand.”
—*M. E. Servoss.*

NOT long after their marriage, important business arrangements necessitated the removal of Thomas Wakefield to London, Maurice Listun to Aylesbury, and Gerald Listun to Plymouth.

As this arrangement was to be permanent, their newly-made homes were likewise removed to these new centres.

In each place kindred minds were sought and found with whom to worship God. In London, Thomas and Margaret Wakefield joined William Kiffin’s church. At Aylesbury, Maurice and Muriel Listun threw in their lot with a very saintly band of men and women, whose meeting place was an outlying barn. While at George Street, Plymouth, Gerald and Rebecca Listun found an enthusiastic church of fellow-believers. These removals from Bristol were followed by yet another, for about the same time unmated Harry Wakefield accepted the pressing invitation of John Myles to assist him in the pastoral work of the church at Ilston, South Wales.

While preparations for these changes were proceeding, grave rumours were heard about the meeting houses being closed, worship in them made illegal, and all defaulters severely punished. The reactionary City

Fathers, emboldened by the confusion in Parliament, through lack of unity amongst Cromwell's ministers, and the consequent weakening of Government control, had been hinting for some time what they would do if the political tide turned in their favour ; and now that Cromwell was dead and the Anglicans were urging immediate action, there was nothing to prevent the City Fathers carrying out their sinister intentions, under the Elizabethan Conventicle Act.

According to the rumours, the dissenters might worship in the parish churches, and their ministers might officiate there, but they would not be allowed to meet anywhere else.

Should these rumours not prove to be idle tales, the new situation promised to be a most effective stranglehold for the Free Churches in Bristol, and their leaders were quick to see this and to act accordingly.

" We cannot, we must not agree to this," they exclaimed with one voice, " for if we do, there will be an end to Free Church life in Bristol."

Under these circumstances the members of the two churches were privately summoned to meet their ministers and officers for a conference in the Hanham Woods, on the fringe of the Kingswood Forest ; and in that woodland clearing, without let or hindrance, they met to discuss their future plans.

It was a cold, frosty day in December, 1658, when this first open-air meeting was held. The sun shone gloriously upon the forest at noonday, reflecting its glory in myriads of sparkling frost crystals that hung gracefully from every tree. The russet hues of decadent leaves which had not yielded to the imperious order of imperial autumn to lay their glory in the dust, disclosed patches of golden splendour to the admiring eyes of

these zealous Baptists who were ever ready to see God's handiwork in all the scenes of nature round about them.

The members took the precaution of going in small companies, and by different routes, so as not to arouse the suspicions of the City Fathers, for it was essential that their conference should be private and undisturbed. But notwithstanding this precaution, the ever-vigilant George Derville soon detected that something unusual was happening, and stealthily prepared to follow them. To prevent this the ever-resourceful Edward Terrill devised an amusing plan for outwitting the informer.

Edward mobilised the younger members of the churches for a day's excursion into the country, under the leadership of Thomas Wakefield. They were to make a demonstrative start from the city by marching along the Hanham Road, and then foil the informer by taking a circuitous journey over Barton Hill to St. Anne's Ferry and round to the opposite side of the city.

The plan appealed to the sporting instincts of the young people, and succeeded in inducing George Derville to follow them. On the rising ground over Barton Hill they were immensely amused watching the informer, down in the lanes, doubling and dodging to avoid detection. From Brislington they proceeded to Stockwood, and there on the brow of the hill they halted for their midday meal.

George Derville was sorely puzzled at this. He became doubly vigilant, now peering from one angle and now from another, so as to ascertain the personnel at the supposed meeting.

"Poor George," said Tom Wakefield ironically. "What a persevering fellow he is, to be sure."

"I wonder whether he brought his lunch basket with him? He must be in a bad way for food if he hasn't.

"Suppose we invite him to lunch. You know what the apostle says: 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink'."

"Oh yes, do," spoke all the young enthusiasts at once.

Tom Wakefield required no further prompting, but ran down the hill shouting: "Master Derville, Master Derville, come up and have lunch with us."

Derville received a shock at hearing himself so addressed, for he was priding himself on following the Puritans closely without being observed.

However, he tried to cover his agitation in the usual way with unscrupulous men, by telling a falsehood.

"Good morning, Thomas Wakefield. I am surprised to find friends so far away from Bristol. I am taking a constitutional for my health's sake. And as I brought no lunch with me I shall be grateful to find a table in the wilderness."

"Then come along with us, Master Derville, and have a jolly tuck in," said jovial Tom, "for we have enough and to spare," and putting his arm into Derville's, Tom Wakefield, with his face all aglow with mirth, brought the arch-enemy of dissent into the midst of the picnic party and bade him sit down and eat. The young people gave him a most hilarious reception.

Derville was obviously ill at ease, and nonplussed at not finding the older Puritans there. "Where could they be?" he thought. He scrutinised everyone in the company with dubious eyes, and furtively stared into the grove of fir trees near by, as if he expected to find them there.

"My eyes have misled me this morning," he reflected. "However, my ears must now tell me what I want to know."

He had a voracious appetite and did justice to all that was set before him, but throughout the meal he listened intently to the running conversation of the young people, and hoped that some word would be dropped that would give him the key to the day's proceedings. In this he was disappointed. The young people were gleeful but cautious. They conversed on all the topics of the day except the one dearest to Derville's heart.

When the meal was over they suggested that their visitor should complete the excursion with them. Derville professed to be grateful for the invitation, declared that it would have been the greatest pleasure of his life to accompany such a jolly set of young men and maidens, but that important business in the city compelled him to return by the nearest road.

Notwithstanding that explicit statement, he did not return, but continued to follow them, though at a greater distance, along the lanes to Whitchurch, and back to Bristol by the Wells Road.

The day's excursion was full of fun and merriment for Tom and his party. The memory of it relieved the gloom of many dark days which followed. The laughter which shook their sides then would burst out again and again, when they recalled the many antics of George Derville in trying to cover his spying movements on that memorable December day, 1658.

But while the young Puritans were indulging in the game of hoodwinking a spy, the older ones were bent on serious business in Hanham Woods. The two churches were there in great strength.

Henry Hynam, Lionel and Selina Wakefield, William and Martha Listun, and Andrew Gifford leading the Pithay Church ; Dorothy Hazzard, Thomas Ewins, and John Purnell leading the Broadmead Church ; and Edward and Kathleen Terrill blending the two churches by their divided membership. These and their fellow-members realised the gravity of the circumstances under which they met. They all felt that they were at the beginning of a struggle that would sift them as wheat.

None of them were disposed to minimise the strength or the determination of their opponents to suppress them. The ten years of calm which they had enjoyed, had meant ten years of impotence for their adversaries, who would not fail to retaliate should they return to power.

These heroic Free Churchmen were persuaded that they were not only about to fight a battle for themselves, but for their children and children's children for hundreds of years to come, and it behoved them to enter the conflict prayerfully, resolutely, thoughtfully, after carefully counting the cost.

Their first act, led by the saintly Henry Hynam, was to commit themselves to God in prayer.

Thomas Ewins, in an eloquent discourse, reminded the assembly of the evils which compelled them to leave their parish churches. "If our Free Churches are crushed in the coming struggle, these evils will not be less but probably far greater. Therefore we must resist, even unto blood."

Dorothy Hazzard solemnly affirmed her readiness to face even the fires of Smithfield than return to an apostate church. William Listun and Lionel were ready to organise the sternest resistance to any attempt to close their meeting houses.

Edward Terrill doubted the power of any City Council to do it. "It is unfortunate that Cromwell is dead, but Richard Cromwell rules, and surely he must have some powerful ministers who will sustain the laws of the great Protector. These must be discovered and made acquainted with the threatening attitude of the authorities in Bristol."

The two churches agreed upon a plan of mutual assistance, and throughout the thirty years of persecution which followed, they held loyally together as one resolute body.

Andrew Gifford, the newly-appointed assistant of Henry Hynam, closed the conference with prayer.

That first gathering of Baptists in the Hanham Woods was never forgotten. It became a beacon light flashing out its message, "God is no respecter of places," until in the course of time all around Bristol a dozen or more such beacon fires were lighted at which the pure in heart met to worship God.

The members returned by divers ways to their homes in Bristol. Being anxious to know how the picnic party had fared throughout the day, Edward and Kathleen called at the Lawford's Lodge just as Tom Wakefield rushed in to report the wild-geese chase they had given George Derville. All the incidents of the excursion were recalled with gusto, to the amusement of everybody.

"It was a brilliant idea of yours, Edward," said Tom.

"Ah, Tom, but you have added glory to the brilliance. I did not suggest giving the informer a reception, but in doing that, you have put the master-stroke of humour to the day's proceedings, and shown George Derville that Free Churchmen can enjoy pure fun."

As the evening was fast closing in, Edward and Kathleen left the Lodge early for their home in Corn Street.

The grim old jail, in Newgate Street, looked grimmer than ever as the couple approached the entrance gate. Instinctively their arms gripped each other tightly, for in fancy they saw a long threatening arm reaching out to drag them behind its dreadful portal. Was it only a fancy?

Just as they were passing, the iron gates opened and a dark familiar figure stepped out into the roadway. It was the obsequious figure of George Derville. Failing to find the Mayor at home, he had gone to the jail, where preparations were being made for the expected imprisonment of dissenters, and there he had to confess to the Mayor how completely he had been outwitted by the Puritans.

The Mayor was angry with him and threatened to get a more reliable informer if his wits were allowed to go wool-gathering any more. Derville's crest was visibly ruffled as he emerged from the prison.

Edward greeted the crestfallen man with a smile. "George, I hope you have enjoyed the day's sport. The young people say they have had a royal time." Then gravely Edward added, "George, are you always going on this line? To be the hack of persecutors is a poor sort of business. Give it up, George, and play the man. You are young and capable of something better."

"Terrill," said the irrepressible Derville, "you are a clever fellow. You outwit me every time, but, mark my word, I shall have you yet."

With that they parted on that eventful December day, 1658. George Derville, the dark horse of reaction, who returned to a home made loveless by his brutal ways; and Edward and Kathleen Terrill to a home made sweet and beautiful by mutual love.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BURSTING OF THE STORM

"When at Thy word the tempests form,
When at Thy breath the mists o'ershroud,
Provide Thy still voice for the storm,
Provide Thy rainbow for the cloud."

—*G. Matheson.*

ON a bright Sunday morning in June, 1662, the streets of Bristol were thronged with worshippers who had been attending service at one or other of the many churches and meeting houses. They all looked as if they had just heard news, which to some gave pleasure, to others pain. Passing groups would pause and exchange words, but their conversation was mostly in whispers, so that an observer would have found it difficult to explain what had happened.

Two of the grave-looking pedestrians are easily recognised, they are Lionel Wakefield and Edward Terrill. They have been to their respective meetings along the Rosemary Walk, and while coming through the Newgate had heard the serious news that an Act of Uniformity had been passed, which would prevent ministers officiating in parish churches unless they gave their assent and consent to the Prayer Book and all it contains.

"The Act will not affect Andrew Gifford," said Lionel, "for he is not in Holy Orders. And even if he were, I am certain he would not conform."

"No, nor will the Act affect Thomas Ewins," said Edward. "When the first blow fell upon us two years ago, he was peremptorily dismissed from his public

office as lecturer to the city churches, and strictly forbidden to conduct services in our Broadmead meeting house, and because he persisted in doing this as our minister, he was arrested and committed to the Newgate Jail for two months.

"For years he had been serving in the dual capacity of lecturer to the city churches under the authority of the City Fathers, and as our pastor at Broadmead, and filled both offices with distinction. When he was so shabbily dismissed from his lectureship we very gladly received him as our whole-time minister. The Act therefore will not affect him."

"But I am concerned, Edward, about those hundreds of faithful ministers who will have no other church to go to, and no assured living when they are compelled to leave the Established Church."

"It will be hard; it will be cruel," commented Edward. "Many of these ministers have delicate wives and children, and have given the best of their lives to the Church."

"But will the Act of Uniformity be the only repressive measure of the King's Government, think you, Edward?"

"I fear not," replied Edward sadly. "I anticipate that the Elizabethan Conventicle Act will be rigorously enforced, and that will mean the closing down of our Free Churches and possibly fines, banishment, or even death at the stake for you and me."

This reflection naturally made the two men very grave. And this gravity was quickly detected by Selina and Kathleen when they reached the Castle House. Grace was so ill on this particular Sunday morning that Kathleen decided to stay with her and Selina, while Edward and Lionel went to service.

Both women were anxious to know why their husbands looked so grave when they returned. When they learned the news, instantly their thoughts flew to their loved ones at London, Aylesbury, Plymouth and Ilston.

"But will the King allow this Act of Uniformity to become law?" enquired Kathleen. "Did he not promise at Breda that he would have regard for all tender consciences and that his subjects would have no restraints put upon their religious observances?"

"He did," replied Edward, "but these promises count for nothing now he is King. Did he not promise to show mercy to the judges who condemned his father? And yet, already thirteen judges have been executed as regicides and others dismissed from office, while the bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw and Ireton have been shamefully exhumed and hung on gibbets at Tyburn. The King has learnt nothing from his father's experience, and now he has put his seal to the Act of Uniformity, which will compel all the ministers who were in sympathy with the Commonwealth leaders, either to conform or quit their livings. Anglicanism has triumphed at the expense of the King's honour, for to this end has the King been led by his ecclesiastical advisers. We are in for a dreary time."

"Oh, my dear children, how will they fare?" said Selina, in the anguish of her soul.

"They will fare, dear, as the faithful have ever fared in times of tribulation," said her husband. "They have taken their stand nobly in the places to which they have gone. Already they are regarded as leaders in their respective churches. Selina dear, we have committed them to God, whose they are and whom they serve. We have done our part to make them what they

are, and now we must leave them in God's kindly care. He who was with the Hebrew children in the furnace will be with them, and He will be our comfort."

Bad news was daily brought into the city concerning the sufferings caused by the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity. Two thousand ministers were compelled to leave their churches because they could not violate their conscience. They were among the best, the most saintly and the most learned ministers in England, but they had to go because they could not accept the teaching in the Prayer Book.

St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, was the saddest day in English ecclesiastical history. It commemorated the wholesale massacre of God's people in France ninety years before. What would follow the ejection of these two thousand ministers in England, no one could foresee. The cruel law had to be obeyed and they went forth, they knew not whither, nor what the unknown way would unfold.

As expected, the enforcement of the Elizabethan Conventicle Act plunged the Puritans everywhere into a sea of trouble. By it John Bunyan had already served two years in Bedford Jail. But imprisonment was not enough to satisfy the "Root and Branch" persecutors. They wanted to enforce the law of transportation and rekindle the fires of Smithfield, so as to rid the whole country of Nonconformity.

But while the Puritans in Bristol were wondering what form persecution would take amongst them, the Wakefield and Listun families were thrown into great distress. Recent letters from London, Aylesbury, Plymouth and Ilston spoke of a bitter spirit of hostility that was manifesting itself towards dissent in these places.

The letter from Plymouth spoke of a raid upon the George Street meeting house, when the minister, Abraham Cheare, was arrested and committed to Exeter Jail.

"Mother, the attack upon our meeting was so sudden that before anyone could come to the aid of our minister he was securely held by the officers. We made a desperate attempt to release him, but failed. It is dreadful to think of our dear pastor in that horrid dungeon at Exeter."

Then a letter came from London which told of an attempt to arrest William Kiffin.

"Mother," said Thomas Wakefield, "we had been previously advised that a raid might be expected, and so when the officers came we spirited the minister away."

Harry's letter from Ilston spoke of the sharp encounters John Myles was having with the authorities, and the decision of the church to emigrate to America should these troublesome scenes be repeated.

But the letter from Aylesbury was most disquieting. It told of the arrest of all the leaders. It was written from the prison, where both Maurice and Muriel were incarcerated. During their four years' residence they had become influential members of the General Baptist Church.

"Mother," said Muriel, "Maurice was conducting the service in a large tithe barn, and I had just offered prayer, when the officers rushed in and seized us both, and eight of our principal members, including Mary Jackman, a widow who has six children, and removed us all to this jail. What they will do with us we do not know. They were very rough and rude. This is a damp and dirty room in which we are detained. We are all

together, with other prisoners ; there is no privacy for any of us.

“ Do not grieve, mother dear. We have only done what was our duty to do. We are happy to be counted worthy to suffer for our Lord. The trial is fixed for the end of the month. What the punishment will be we have no idea, but the hints of the warders indicate that it will not be light.”

Great was the anguish of Selina and Martha when this letter arrived, and a similar one from Maurice to his parents. William Listun and Lionel proceeded at once to procure counsel to defend their children at the trial, but before they could get anyone to intercede, the terrible news came through that the ten prisoners had been condemned to death.

The parents were distracted with grief. The members of the two churches assembled to express their sympathy and to enquire what could be done. Thomas Ewins' advice was that he, Lionel and William Listun and Edward Terrill should go post-haste to London, and lay the matter before William Kiffin, who was a great influence in the city. Then he exhorted the members to pray.

“ Prayer opened the prison gates for Peter, and prayer can open prison gates to-day. But if not, let us pray for those condemned to die, that in their death they may make a good confession.”

This exhortation was followed by an earnest prayer by Andrew Gifford for his comrades in the faith, which was interrupted by a noise at the door, and before the weeping congregation had scarce time to open their eyes, Thomas Ewins and Andrew Gifford were both arrested by officers who had rushed into the room.

George Derville's hour had come. Edward Terrill challenged the legality of the arrests ; but the warrants on examination were quite in order, and no useful purpose would be served by resisting their execution.

The prisoners were led away to Newgate Jail under the direction of Derville, who gave a grinning look at Edward, as much as to say, " I've got you this time, Terrill."

The members were overwhelmed with sorrow. Their ministers arrested, to suffer they knew not what, and Maurice and Muriel Listun lying at Aylesbury under condemnation of death.

Edward went to the Mayor to ascertain what was the nature of the charges to be made against the ministers, and when their trial would take place. The Mayor was in high glee over the arrests, and advised Edward to be wary lest he might be led to put him under arrest.

" I have no wish to do that, Mr. Terrill, for you are held in very high esteem in the city."

" When you think it right to arrest me, Mr. Mayor, you are free to do so. And when I am your prisoner, I want no consideration that you cannot give to my friends."

Early the next morning William Listun, Lionel and Edward hurried off to London to see what could be done for Maurice and Muriel. Their plan was to interview William Kiffin, the merchant pastor, and to obtain his counsel and co-operation. They were very cordially received when they arrived at the merchant's house.

" It is good to meet you again, friends, though your errand is such a sorrowful one. Your report is very distressing. Thomas Ewins and Andrew Gifford can ill be spared at this critical juncture. We are in for a

long period of tribulation, I fear. Several attempts have been made to arrest me, but so far my deacons have foiled the officers when they have come to our meetings.

"But this news from Buckinghamshire is outrageous. The fires of martyrdom must never be lighted again. The King is reactionary, I know; but he is made more so by those around him who are vindictive towards those who brought his father to the block. We dissenters are marked men for the part we took in the Civil War. Then, behind all the political intrigues, the English hierarchy are bent on crushing dissent and obtaining the supremacy for their own religious order. Still, we are in the field, and must not allow ourselves to be suppressed.

"I will go and seek an interview with the King and point out to him how ill it would become a King to sign death warrants in these enlightened days on matters of conscience, especially after his promise at Breda to be mindful of tender consciences."

William Kiffin succeeded in seeing the King. Charles professed to be surprised that such a law was on the Statute Book. He was impressed by Kiffin's appeal for his friends, and promised not to sign the death warrants of Maurice and Muriel Liston. Then the merchant pastor pleaded for the lives of the other condemned dissenters, and obtained the King's promise that they should not die.

Lionel, William and Edward waited anxiously at the palace gates while the momentous interview took place. The news of the reprieve gave indescribable relief to the three waiting men when their friend rejoined them.

"And now," said Kiffin, "let us hasten to Aylesbury and see the prisoners."

Pastor Kiffin was a good rider, and in a very short time the four horsemen arrived at the county jail of Buckinghamshire, where they were received with scant courtesy by the warders.

"We are under orders to let no one see the prisoners," they said. "They are condemned to death, and deserve to die, and the sooner they are dead, the better," came the callous answer of the surly chief officer.

"But I have the King's warrant for countermanding the death sentence," said Pastor Kiffin. "They are not to die. I have the King's permit to see all the prisoners to-day."

These two documents, signed by the King and stamped with the royal seal, could not be disputed. The four men were then admitted, and took the good news to the condemned prisoners.

Great was their rejoicing, and great was their gratitude to William Kiffin for his timely intervention. Most affecting was the interview between the fathers and their two children. They clung fondly to each other before they could utter a word. Then when it dawned upon the young husband and wife that the death sentence had been revoked by the King, they shouted for joy, and clasped each other in a loving embrace.

William Kiffin reminded the prisoners that they were not free, and that some other punishment would be substituted. Very tenderly did he exhort them to "Endure as seeing Him who is invisible."

"The brethren will pray for you, and we shall continue to hope that these evil times will soon pass away, and leave us free to worship God in our own Puritan way."

The parents asked the chief warder whether a private cell could not be allotted to the young couple, and whether he would undertake to have it kept clean and warm and dry. A generous gift to the warders procured liberal promises of comfort for Maurice and Muriel and their companions in tribulation.

As nothing more could be done for the prisoners, the messengers of good tidings withdrew, amidst many tears of joy and sorrow, to become again messengers of good news to the sorrowing families in London and Bristol.

After parting company with Pastor Kiffin at the cross-roads, William, Lionel and Edward rode in silence for several miles. They were full of grief for the dear ones they had left behind. And each was wondering what the commuted sentence would be.

"William," said Lionel, breaking the silence, "the children are wonderfully resigned. Death hath no terrors for them."

"No, nor life either," quietly observed William Listun. It may be that life will be full of evil things for them; terrible are the conditions of our English prisons. But if I mistake not their temperament, they will greet any hardship with a cheer, and count it a joy to suffer for their Lord and Saviour."

"Wonderful are the compensations of the Lord," added Lionel. "He clothes His ransomed ones with coats of mail. He makes their souls impervious to the assaults of the enemy. In quietness and confidence is their strength."

When the travellers arrived in Bristol the news of the reprieve was quickly told and circulated. Deep sorrow was turned into great joy. And yet, the joy was tempered by the reflection that Maurice and Muriel

were not free, but had to endure some commuted sentence.

At Castle House and Lawford's Lodge there was a fear that this sentence would be banishment to some distant island. And this was dreaded almost as much as death itself. To be compelled to live amongst strangers, barbarians, transported criminals and slaves, in a climate laden with deadly fevers, and in districts infested with wild beasts, was in the seventeenth century a form of punishment which shook the stoutest hearts. And yet that was the commuted sentence passed upon Maurice and Muriel and their fellow-prisoners.

They were banished for life from England, home and loved ones, and not even allowed to see their friends before leaving.

Helpless in their protestation at such inhuman conduct the Puritans were driven back upon their trust in God, whose sustaining grace had never failed them.

Not many days elapsed before they had evidence of God's goodness. It came in a letter Muriel was able to send by a trusted messenger, just as the fateful vessel was leaving for the unknown land.

"Mother dear, do not grieve ; we are doing what you and father would do if you were in our place. God will go with us, and He will be our refuge. In whatever place we are made to live, we will live for Him, and it may be we shall be able to bring comfort and hope to many a homesick sufferer. We are happy that we are permitted to go together. If we never meet again in this life, be assured, dear mother and father, we shall strive to live worthy of that life above where we shall be united for evermore. Love to you all from Muriel and Maurice."

The curtain falls upon these two ardent young Puritans ; henceforth they are numbered with the banished ones. They are lost in the unutterable mystery of the unknown.

Serious as the punishment was for Thomas Ewins and Andrew Gifford, it was very light in comparison. They were heavily fined, but as neither would pay the fines they were committed to the Newgate Jail for six months.

The storm had burst in unmitigated fury.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BATTLE OF WITS

“ True wit is nature to advantage dress’d,
What oft was thought, but ne’er so well expressed.”
—*Pope.*

THE Puritans were never suffered to remain long at ease in Zion. Persecution was now the accepted condition of their daily life. They expected it, and often by unceasing vigilance frustrated it. They were not to be caught “ napping ” again, as when Thomas Ewins and Andrew Gifford were so suddenly pounced upon. Watchers were placed at the outer and inner doors of their meeting places, and whenever officers appeared the message was passed along to the minister or deacon conducting the service.

Five lines of attack were open to their adversaries.

First, to sue the Puritans for not conforming. Penalty : fine, £20 per month.

Second, to sue them for meeting in non-consecrated buildings. Penalty : fines, imprisonment or banishment.

Third, to sue them for ministering without a licence. Penalty : fines or imprisonment.

Fourth, to excommunicate them by the Bishop’s Court and keep them in jail until they promised to attend church regularly.

Fifth, to sue them for holding meetings in their homes when more than five strangers were present. Penalty : fines, £40 the preacher, £20 the householder, 10/- for each person present.

The informer received one-third of the fines paid. George Derville was very chagrined when the Puritans would not pay the fines and swell his income.

The dogged perseverance of the persecuted frequently wore down the zeal of the persecutors, so that periodically they withdrew from the chase. For the records tell of ten waves of persecution which swept over the city.

It was in these intervals the Puritans were able to review their position and marshal their forces for the next attack. It was also in these intervals their adversaries adopted new methods of repression.

"Fines are useless. Imprisonment is unavailing. Why not enforce the Conventicle Act and get the leaders banished? It is they who are keeping dissent from collapsing."

This idea was seized upon as a solution of their problem. Four men were marked down for transportation when the next attack began. These were Lionel Wakefield, Edward Terrill, William Listun and Andrew Gifford.

George Derville was commissioned to arrest all he found in the conventicles, and under no account to let these four men escape. Such importance did he attach to this commission that he invited Robert Slyman to come down from London to assist him. Robert very quickly appeared on the scene, as ready as ever to do anything that would bring trouble to Lionel Wakefield. Other kindred spirits were enrolled as constables, and behind these instruments of repression there were three grim figures directing their actions: the Mayor, the Sheriff, and Guy Carlton, the Lord Bishop of Bristol.

It was soon apparent to the Puritans that something was on foot. But so vigilant were the stewards at the meetings that George Derville and company again and

again failed to make an arrest. The Mayor was very angry and censured Derville severely for his failure.

“ Well, your Worship,” retorted the offended informer, “ you come next time we make a raid and see for yourself what difficult vermin they are to get out of their holes.”

The Mayor came, and in one place found the minister and deacons behind closed shutters, so that they could be heard but not seen ; at another place a hole had been knocked through the wall dividing the meeting house from the adjoining one, and through that hole the minister was conducting the service. When at another time arrest was certain, the quarry slipped through a trap door and disappeared. On another occasion the minister and deacons mixed with the congregation when the officers arrived, so that no one could tell who the officiating minister was.

After repeated failure Derville and Slyman planned that certain constables should attend a meeting, disguised as Puritans, and see who conducted the service, when they would rush in and make the arrests. This was so cleverly done that their presence was not suspected. At that meeting all the leaders marked down for banishment spoke, and exhorted the members to remain faithful.

Suddenly a scuffle was heard between the stewards and the informers who forced their way into the room. Then from different parts of the meeting the disguised constables rose and seized the two pastors, Lionel, William Listun, and Edward Terrill.

Highly elated, Derville and Slyman were about to march the five men to prison, when Edward Terrill demanded to see the warrants.

"Certainly," said Derville, with a jaunty air. He searched one pocket and then another, and all his pockets without finding the warrants, and swearing all the time that he had them.

"Then let me see them," calmly demanded Edward Terrill.

Derville searched his pockets again and again, and then vigorously scratched his head as if he expected to find the missing documents there.

"You won't find them up there, George," humorously observed Edward. "That chamber is too vacant."

"I don't know where they are," said Derville in desperation. "I know they have been duly made out by the Justices."

"Then let me see them," quietly reiterated Edward, "and we will submit to the arrest."

"I must have left them at home, when I made up my disguise."

"Then you go back for them, George, and in the meantime hands off the prisoners, for without warrants we are free."

The constables reluctantly released their hold on the prisoners, while George Derville hastened to his home to get the warrants.

"Now, pastor," said Edward to Thomas Ewins, "will you please pronounce the benediction and dismiss the assembly, for it is time we were home for dinner?"

When the luckless George returned with the warrants, the wanted men were gone. His colleagues, who now looked ludicrous in Puritan garments, received him with derisive laughter.

In 1665, after the events at Aylesbury, the Elizabethan Conventicle Act was superseded by another in which the death sentence was dropped and banishment

for life reduced to a term of seven years. This Act gave the opponents of dissent a new and powerful weapon which they did not fail to use.

The Puritans in Bristol were not slow in realising the new danger. With their meeting houses closed against them, they fell back upon private rooms in their homes, and the secret places in the woods, and here they found their Bethels, and the entrance gates into heavenly blessedness.

Regardless of the penalty of banishment they persisted in meeting somewhere. New homes were opened to them which for a time eluded the ever-vigilant George Derville.

A meeting was in progress in Edward's own house, when Derville and Slyman demanded admission. The members escaped by the back door while Edward contended with the law at the front door. When at length the informers entered there were only four persons present beside Edward and Kathleen. These were guests from London. However, they were arrested, and after a week's imprisonment Edward secured their release on the ground that the four did not exceed the number allowed by law.

Again the informers were frustrated, when, in the company of the Mayor, they smashed down the door of a house in Mary-le-Port Street, and rushed in to seize the leaders. A few members were arrested, but the majority had left by a secret door into the next house, and so got away. Edward and Thomas Ewins were seen leaving by the back door, and were arrested. At their trial on the following day, the Mayor was about to commit them both to seven years' banishment, when Edward demanded evidence that he and Thomas Ewins were at the meeting. None of the officers had seen

them there, and as no evidence was forthcoming from any other source, they escaped the direful penalty which seemed so certain. For this deliverance the churches were very grateful.

The outbreak of the black plague in Bristol stopped the persecution for a time. The dreadful disease wrought fearful havoc. Many were stricken down and in a few hours were dead. The citizens were panic-stricken and crowds fled from the city in terror. Then it was that the Free Churches showed of what material they were composed. Instead of fleeing from the city as many of their persecutors had done, they stayed and looked after the plague-stricken ones, and endeavoured to nurse them back to health.

Dorothy Hazzard, Martha, Selina, Kathleen and Hannah Gifford formed an association of nurses, who fearlessly visited the stricken houses, nursed the sick, tended the dying, and comforted the sorrowful. Regardless of their own lives, health and comfort, they went anywhere, to friend and foe alike, with the ministry of love and pity. In this Good Samaritan service, their hands were strengthened and their hearts encouraged by the co-operation of their menfolk.

These, ministers and laymen alike, laboured unceasingly in carrying supplies, ministering to the sick, and pointing the dying to Jesus, the sinner's Friend, and when the last breath was drawn, carrying the dead reverently to their burial.

Many were the victims of the terrible disease, but many were snatched as brands from the burning by the nurses and their helpers. When the contagion was at its height, George Derville was found raving in the street, helplessly drunk. His wife was down with the plague and he was afraid to go near her lest he might



“ If anyone has to suffer for this day’s proceedings, then
here am I, a broken and a suffering woman.” *Page 230.*

contract the disease. Selina and Kathleen went to the stricken woman and ministered to her physical and spiritual needs, but from the first her case was seen to be hopeless.

"It won't be long," she sighed. "The end is very near; the cross has been so heavy. I am longing to drop the heavy burden and wear the crown. Look after George; I fear he will be worse when I am gone. He promised to be such a good husband when I married him. God forgive him. I love him still in spite of his faults. I wish he would come. I want to see him before I die."

They went out and tried to induce the faithless husband to see his dying wife. But he could not be persuaded. He was too intoxicated to be reasoned with. His drunken answer was: "I don't mind catching Puritans, but I'm not going to catch plagues."

Selina and Kathleen returned to the dying woman and did their best to comfort her. In a few minutes the eyes closed, and Joan Derville, a most amiable Christian woman, was released from her worthless partner.

The Puritans seemed to possess charmed lives. Only one of their number was affected, and that was Hannah, the young wife of Andrew Gifford. She was nursing the constable who had arrested her husband when she contracted the disease. Martha relieved her of her case, and Selina and Kathleen took charge of Hannah. Hour after hour they fought the enemy. The disease had taken a firm hold. Again and again they despaired of seeing her recover, but good nursing and the blessing of God brought Hannah safely through. Thanks to Martha's incessant care, the constable recovered, and was so grateful that he declared he would never again

take part in the persecution of such good people as the Puritans.

It was for services such as these that persecution was not renewed for a time. The nursing association had shown the citizens that the Puritans were not enemies to the State, but men and women endowed with kindly hearts that were ever ready to express themselves in kindly deeds and words. But just as the good Joseph did ~~was~~ forgotten by the Egyptians, so the good these Puritans did was soon forgotten by their Egyptian-minded neighbours.

It was the same elsewhere. The correspondence of Grace Wakefield gave evidence of the revival of persecution. In London and Plymouth, Tom and Gerald were kept constantly on the alert to prevent arrests at their meetings. At Ilston the church terminated the continual persecution by emigrating to the Old Colony, New England, John Myles and Harry Wakefield going with them, to establish the church in that far-away land.

Fearing a sudden outburst of persecution in Bristol, the Puritans again met secretly in the woods and in private houses. Nor had they met many times before they observed George Derville prowling about, looking more fierce than ever now that he had lost his wife.

For several weeks they were able to elude him. But one day the meeting place was located through the information of an unfriendly neighbour. It was the same house in Mary-le-Port Street where Thomas Ewins and Edward had been caught escaping by the back door.

This time Derville brought the Mayor, aldermen and constables stealthily to the back door, while Slyman and other constables stationed themselves quietly at the front door. At a given signal, iron bars crashed in

the doors, then from front and back the officers rushed into the house.

With remarkable celerity Edward drew many of the members through a door which led into the garret, and from thence into the next house, while Lionel and William Listun kept back the intruders as long as they were able. Just as they were about to enter the room, Mr. Ellis, the householder, trundled a large cupboard before the garret door and covered the retreat of those who had left.

Thirty-one persons were arrested, tried and condemned to seven years' banishment. These included Lionel and Selina, William and Martha Listun, and Thomas Ewins.

The sentence fell like a bomb upon the whole city. Never before did persecution appear such a heinous thing. There were protests and demonstrations, but they were all in vain. The only concession that was made was to the minister, Thomas Ewins, who, on the ground of age and physical infirmities, was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment.

Great was the grief in Puritan circles. Neither the exalted positions of Lionel and William Listun, nor the Good Samaritan service rendered by Selina and Martha during the plague, could bring any mitigation of the sentence.

"We are determined," said the Mayor, "in the name of our august monarch, King Charles, whose laws we are administering, to stamp out this Puritan pestilence from the city."

Grace, Kathleen and Edward were permitted to see their parents, and most affecting was the parting from the invalid child.

"Kathleen," said Selina, "you and Edward will go to the Castle House during our absence, and take care of Grace. God be with you, children. Your enemies will rejoice that we are transported; but do not retaliate, except to return good for evil. Never allow yourselves to go back upon your faith. Others have suffered more than we do to-day. Remember that God can bring good out of evil. They are taking us to Jamaica, and there we shall look for Maurice and Muriel, and perhaps may bring them comfort in their lonely sorrow. In seven years' time we shall hope to return, and oh, what a joy it will be if we can bring our banished ones back with us."

Brave as they all tried to be, they could not restrain their tears when they came to say good-bye.

Lionel's parting message was: "Edward, keep the flag flying. Much will depend upon you. Greater trials may follow, but never doubt the issue of the struggle. As soon as we are free we shall be back to help you reach the goal."

And so they parted, the parents from their children, and Selina from her suffering daughter, who was as dear to her as the apple of her eye.

Greathearts were they all.

Thomas Ewins' commuted sentence was carried out in the noisome Newgate Jail. It was a severe sentence for one whose health had been shattered by previous imprisonments. But he took the sentence with his wonted graceful air, saying: "The Lord can make the cell a palace beautiful to my soul."

The prison was no exception to the cold, damp and filthy prisons of that period, where thousands of Puritans were languishing and dying. But the old saint thought not of that, his eyes were upwards upon the crown that

was not far distant. He bore the confinement with exemplary fortitude ; he thought about and prayed much for the scattered flock he could no longer attend in person.

On every Lord's Day he would climb to the top of the four-storied prison, and through the grated window preach to the assembled crowd in the street below. It was a great effort which told heavily upon his failing strength.

When the twelve months had expired, it was seen that the end was not far off. He ministered for a little while to his beloved people, but the home call soon came, and Thomas Ewins, Broadmead's first pastor of commanding eminence, passed into his glorious rest.

CHAPTER XIX

TRANSPORTED

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."—*An Exile in Babylon.*

WITH unseemly haste the condemned Puritans were sent to Jamaica.

The *Flying Eagle* was a sailing vessel of small tonnage, with shockingly inadequate accommodation for such a mixed company of slaves, criminals, Puritans and sailors.

Captain Boniface was a seasoned sailor. For many years he had piloted the *Flying Eagle* through tempestuous seas which had sent other vessels to destruction.

He was a big, stout-hearted, rough-mannered individual, a stern commander, quick to perceive and as quick to punish any mean-hearted lout who feigned some physical weakness in order to escape an irksome task, but as tender-hearted as a woman to any member of his crew who was really in trouble. He was therefore feared and yet greatly loved by all his men.

Robert Slyman was put in charge of the exiles. He was held responsible for their safe delivery. His duty was to superintend their commissariat and see that they got the regulation diet. That in itself was bad enough, but in addition Slyman chose to make himself very objectionable. He took a wicked delight in multiplying the disabilities of Lionel and William Listun, until at last the Captain interfered and asked for more humane consideration of the captives.

Slyman resented this interference and continued his offensive treatment. Thrice the Captain rebuked him ; then turning upon him angrily one day, he said, " If this sort of business is not stopped, I'll put you in irons, Robert Slyman. I'll have you to know I'm Captain of this vessel. You shall not abuse decent people on my ship. I am no sort of religious professional, but I know the genuine article when I see it, and I can tell you, Robert Slyman, you've got the genuine article here. If ever I become religious, theirs is the religion I'll have. There's body and soul in it. You are not going on with your pin-pricking capers under my nose, so if I see any more of it I'll clap you in irons and keep you there until I get back to Bristol."

This stern reproof was salutary. Slyman feared the Captain would be as good as his word, and left the exiles in peace.

When the days were fine, Captain Boniface would invite Lionel and William and their wives to come on deck and parade together, and would spend much time with them in friendly conversation. He was usually reminiscent :

" You are not the first prisoners I've taken to Jamaica. For years I've been at this business. I remember some five years ago taking a batch of prisoners from London, who had been carted up from Buckinghamshire. The poor beggars had been condemned to death, but something happened and the King wouldn't have them hanged nor burnt, and so they were transported.

" I did pity them. There were delicate women among them who had been brought up tender-like, and who had never before been so roughly handled. They were well-nigh broken-hearted when the vessel put out to sea, and the land that held all their loved ones was

only a dark streak upon the sky line. Amongst them were two plucky ones who became known on board as Dr. Maurice and Dr. Muriel, for to the sick and sad and sorrowful they brought healing and comfort and cheer.

"I never saw such a couple before. Night and day they were at it. And oh, couldn't they preach, the lass as well as her mate. My heart was made that tender by their preaching that I've never been since the kind of man I was before. If only the priests would preach like them, we should all soon be saints and angels."

"And where did you take the 'doctors,' Captain?" enquired Lionel.

"To Jamaica. They were put on a plantation near Port Royal."

"Have you seen them since?" asked Selina.

"No, though I've been to Jamaica every year since. But on my last visit I heard that a remarkable couple of prisoners had been liberated from plantation work and were touring the island, and performing miracles of healing amongst the settlers, slaves and prisoners. Nobody could tell me their names, but I reckoned they were Dr. Maurice and Dr. Muriel as we used to call them on board."

The hearts of the parents burned within them as they listened to the Captain's story of their own dear children.

"We thank you, Capatain, for your cheering message," said Lionel. "It is the first news we have received about our children since they were taken from us five years ago."

"What!" said the Captain in blank astonishment. "You the parents or Dr. Maurice and Dr. Muriel, my two patron saints?"

"We are the parents of Maurice and Muriel," said Martha.

"Well, well, well, wonders will never cease. Then let me have your hands." And with that he shook the hands of the four parents as if he would shake them off.

"No wonder I took to you so quickly. I see now you have the same spirit as those two young ducklings."

The Captain's story lit up the gloom of these four faithful souls, and they thanked God for the children whom He was making perfect through suffering.

When the *Flying Eagle* cast her anchor in Port Royal, as Kingston was called in those days, Captain Boniface introduced these four prisoners to the prison officials in his own cheery way. To those stern-looking executors of grim English laws he shouted: "Another consignment of doctors for you. You have had the chips, and rare good ones I reckon you have found them, and now I bring you the blocks. Here are the parents of Dr. Maurice and Dr. Muriel, who, like their children, will nurse your sick ones back to health again."

The officials looked surprised, but made no observation. Very curtly the prisoners were dismissed to different plantations, according to the category on the crime sheet brought by Slyman. Then turning to Lionel and Selina, William and Martha, the chief warder said: "Your crime is most serious, consequently your punishment is ordered to be most severe. Under these circumstances I must keep you close at hand, until I ascertain which plantation will be the most suited to your deserts. Officers, take these prisoners to those huts yonder, give them the food prescribed for desperate criminals, and mind you keep a strict watch over them."

Slyman was elated. Having duly delivered the prisoners, he was satisfied that Lionel Wakefield would now get his deserts.

Captain Boniface stood by the four prisoners while their crime sheet was read, and when they were gruffly ordered to proceed to the huts, he shook their hands, and wished them luck. And then in an aside, he whispered : " I'll try and see you before I set sail."

The huts to which they were taken were comfortless abodes, there was very little in them in the way of furniture ; their only merit was, they adjoined each other, and had inside communication, so that as long as the prisoners were kept there, they would not feel lonesome.

Captain Boniface paid them a visit before he left for Bristol, and received letters for Grace and Kathleen. He had ascertained from the chief warder that they were to stay at Port Royal, and if they were doctors and nurses there would be plenty for them to do along that line.

" I have been trying to get in touch with Dr. Maurice and Dr. Muriel, but cannot trace them anywhere. Everybody speaks in the highest terms of them. They are ministering to the sick and dying somewhere, and some day you will find them. And when you do, tell them how they led Captain Boniface into the peace of God."

The Captain's parting blessing was a large hamper of provisions, which, like the widow's barrel of meal, seemed to be inexhaustible.

Assured that God had spread His table before them in the presence of their enemies, they proceeded to honour Him by making the best of their changed circumstances. All around them for miles were huts

occupied by slaves, criminals and religious exiles who, during the day, worked on the plantations, while here and there were commodious buildings occupied by the estate owners, agents and overseers.

In every rank of life sufferers were found and tended with the utmost impartiality. Here and there were fellow exiles, who had been years upon the island and were reduced to physical wrecks, but whose faith had not declined.

To these, the coming of the "doctors" was as the breaking of the dawn after a night of inky darkness. They brought mental and spiritual comfort, as well as physical healing. They met the soul hunger for news from the homeland which had been denied them for years. "The travail season is continuing with great severity, but we are persuaded more than ever that our religious life is coming to a new birth, which will be proclaimed as lawful and permitted to make its contribution to the welfare of our beloved land." This cheerful message lifted many a drooping heart to sing: "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

But no enquiries brought the "doctors" any news of Maurice and Muriel. All they could learn was that the couple had been away from Port Royal for months, for great was the need of doctors in other parts of the island.

Weeks and even months passed by in fruitless search for the lost children, until Selina and Martha fell sick of heart hunger. The sickness was followed by fever, and in their delirium they moaned incessantly the names of the two dear ones they could not find.

Almost distracted, Lionel and William went off one morning determined to get some information that might

comfort the invalids, but though they searched diligently they obtained no news at all.

When they returned, disappointed and heart-sore, they were surprised to find a strange woman, meanly clad, tidying up the rooms in which the delirious women were lying. The sick had been carefully tended during their absence, and the bedding made comfortable.

The men enquired of the stranger who she was and where she came from, and what would be her fee. She replied, "My name is Help, my abode is Anywhere, and my fee is Gratitude." And then proceeded with her self-appointed task.

Just then Selina cried in her delirium, "Muriel ! Muriel !" and from the adjoining room Martha moaned, "Maurice ! Maurice ! Maurice !"

The stranger looked startled, and running to the bedside of Selina, gazed intently into the sunken eyes of the sufferer, and then softly whispered, "Mother ! Mother, Muriel is here. Muriel is nursing you."

Lionel and William stood like men transfixed. They had not recognised Muriel in the meanly-clad woman. And neither did Muriel recognise her father until he came and put his hand upon her shoulder and said, "Muriel, is that you ? Are you my long-lost daughter, Muriel ?"

Muriel flung herself into her father's arms and exclaimed, "Oh, father, can it really be you and mother out here in this horrible place ?" And looking at William, she added, "Are you Father Listun, and is that other woman in there Maurice's dear mother ? Oh, how changed we all are, not to know one another."

She went from the arms of her own father to those of her father-in-law, who anxiously enquired, "But where is Maurice, dear ?"

" Oh, he is in yonder hut, where we lodged last night. We take it in turns to nurse the sick and our own darling child, Selina."

" What, have you a little one, Muriel? " said Lionel.

" Oh yes, father, such a darling; she is four years old."

" Muriel. Muriel," came the moans of the unconscious Selina.

" Mother dear, Muriel is here." The sick woman's eyes opened and stared at the stooping figure. " Don't you know me, mother? I am Muriel."

A smile stole over the wasted face, the eyes closed, and restful sleep followed. When she awoke the delirium was gone, and taking Muriel by the hand she faintly said, " I knew you would come, dear. But where is Maurice? "

Just then Maurice arrived, carrying his little daughter, having been fetched by Lionel and his father.

When consciousness returned to Martha, the presence of Maurice and Muriel acted like a cordial to her aching heart.

The two women soon recovered. The comforts contained in the Captain's hamper ministered not a little to their convalescence, and in a few weeks the " doctors," forgetting their own sorrows, were once more busy assuaging the sorrows of others.

At the end of the year the *Flying Eagle* returned with another consignment of criminals, slaves and Puritans. The " doctors " chanced to be at Port Royal when the vessel arrived. Captain Boniface was radiant in his greetings: " I couldn't endure assisting this horrible traffic were it not for the pleasure of assisting you, my dearest friends on earth. Here come my men laden with hampers of good cheer from your dear ones in Bristol. And here come four sprays from your family tree."

The "doctors" stood speechless, their faces blanched with a sudden dread, as they saw Gerald and Rebecca, Thomas and Margaret come on deck and walk towards them. "Were they also banished from home? Were they too condemned to live the terrible life upon the plantations?"

The smiles of the new-comers instantly removed this dread. "They are come," said the smiling Captain, "not as prisoners to grieve you, but as visitors to pay you a family call."

In another moment the children were locked in the arms of their parents. It was a reunion with very mingled feelings of joy and sorrow, when smiles and tears chased each other, as do the sunbeams and showers upon an April day. "But tell us, children," said William, "how you managed to come on this errand of cheer."

"Persecution," said Gerald, "is raging so fiercely in London and Plymouth, that William Kiffin, the merchant pastor, suggested that Thomas and I should take a business trip for him to Jamaica to get out of the way. 'There are enough in your family suffering now,' said he, 'without you being added to the number. Make arrangements for a long absence from your own business, and take your wives with you. The *Flying Eagle* leaves for Jamaica next month, and when you arrive, give my Christian love to all the exiles, and assure them of my constant sympathy. You will go ostensibly to 'do business in deep waters,' but more particularly to have a family gathering in a strange land.'

"Father, we jumped at the opportunity of seeing and cheering you, and here we are. But it grieves us sorely to see how you all have been suffering. Your tattered garments and pale, pinched-in faces tell us volumes of your great privations."

"Children, do not grieve over the outward appearance," said Selina. "We are the same as ever, within. Our faith is not tattered. And when we have been privileged to assure some poor fainting exile of God's unfailing promises, and to nurse a fever-stricken criminal back to health, and to point a dying slave to a loving heavenly Master, we have not felt ourselves to be tattered and wasted, but richly clothed with heavenly garments, and God Himself the health of our countenance."

Little Selina was so petted and idolised that Grandmother Selina was afraid she would be spoilt. The lovely child was to them all as a ray of sunshine on a dark day. She rejuvenated their minds and hearts by her sunny, care-free life.

The business of Gerald and Thomas with the islanders took several weeks to transact. Captain Boniface was ready to stay their time and take their merchandise to London. They seized this opportunity to visit all the Puritans on the plantations and to cheer them with news from home.

"You are never forgotten. Your friends cease not to pray for you. Persecution is fiercer than ever. We have escaped it for a little while, but are returning to continue the struggle. We have a presentiment our days of liberty are numbered. We are members of a marked family. There are two informers, named Derville and Slyman, who are bent on getting every one of us banished, or placed with the thousands who are now languishing and dying in filthy prisons. But don't you lose heart in Jamaica. Our cause is certain to win. We may go under in the struggle, but over our ashes will rise a generation that will bring all our conflicts to a successful issue."

These days on the island sped swiftly by. Very sweet was the fellowship in the adjacent huts at Port Royal. With eyes lit up with love, the inmates saw not the drabness of their surroundings, but the glory of the Lord that was round and about them.

When the time came for the *Flying Eagle* to put out to sea, Captain Boniface excelled himself in soothing the aching hearts of the "merchants" going back to persecution, and those of the "doctors" who must be left behind. He declared humorously that every eye they dried was worth an aching heart.

"You are drying eyes, cheering disconsolate lives, and winning trophies of grace, more precious than all the gold of the Indies. See how these settlers and slaves idolise you. They've never seen your like before, and never had saints and angels to wait upon them. Why, if I took you all back to England, there would be more aching hearts in Jamaica than could be cured in a millennium.

"Think what you mean to everybody out here. If anyone has an ache or pain, oh, it's 'Send for the "doctors"'; if in trouble, 'Send for the "doctors"'; if dying, 'Send for the "doctors".' Why, you are everything to everybody, and the blazing sun would be blackness itself if you all left Jamaica. I tell you, you are piling up riches out here that will make you shine as the stars for ever."

In this rough-and-ready way Captain Boniface comforted the broken-hearted. And yet, not one in that family circle wished more fervently their return than he, and when, having said "Good-bye" to the four parents, and kissed Baby Selina, he took the hands of Maurice and Muriel, his "patron saints," his strong voice broke, his lips quivered, and tears fell fast down the Captain's face.

CHAPTER XX

PARRYING THE HAMMER BLOWS

" Troubled . . . yet not distressed ;
Perplexed, but not in despair ;
Persecuted, but not forsaken ;
Cast down, but not destroyed."

—*St. Paul.*

THE transportation of so many influential members and the death of Thomas Ewins were staggering blows to the churches in Bristol. The members had leaned so much upon these stalwarts that they felt like crashing to the ground without them. But Dorothy Hazzard, Edward and Kathleen, and Andrew and Hannah Gifford, roused them to put a greater trust in God.

Andrew Gifford's hopeful message was : " An army may be lost and yet the battle won. More of us may be imprisoned or transported, the rest must carry on. God is with us, let none despair. Victory will come, though it tarry long. Our conventicles are condemned, our homes are no longer safe ; but nature's sanctuary is still open, let us assemble there for fellowship. There, the weak will become strong, the timid brave, for the glory of God will be our rearguard, and His presence our rock of defence."

The speech enthused the members. Then began a regular course of meetings in the open spaces, and in the sylvan glades round about Bristol.

The one member who might have been despondent was the cheeriest of all. Grace Wakefield, though her

parents and brothers and sisters were in exile, set herself with resolute will to see God's bow in the cloud.

"Persecution always defeats itself," she said one day to Kathleen. "The dispersion of the disciples widened the range of Gospel preaching in the early days, and so it will again. The dispersion of our loved ones will mean the penetration of Jamaica with Gospel light."

Kathleen endorsed her friend's opinion, and added : "You and I, Grace, must keep in the sunshine, however piercing the thorns may be that wreath our brows."

"Yes," replied the invalid. "You and I must live and labour as if no cloud darkened our sky."

Thus these two brave women gave themselves afresh to the ministry of cheer ; the one with her facile pen, and the other with her smiling face, and so they kept the light of hope shining through all those dreary years.

During the years the exiles were in Jamaica, wave after wave of persecution rolled over Bristol. Thomas Ewins was succeeded by Thomas Hardcastle, a great preacher and champion of religious liberty. Before he came to Broadmead he had suffered several terms of imprisonment ranging from six to fifteen months each. During his seven years' pastorate at Broadmead he was committed to seven long terms in Newgate Jail. But, nothing daunted, Thomas Hardcastle persevered, taking up the Puritans' cause in Bristol as zealously as any reformer born in the city.

Desperately did the authorities strive to quench the spirit of dissent ; but the more they strove the more the dissenters multiplied. Again and again men and women were arrested and put in the worst cells in Newgate Jail,—damp earth floor cells without straw or bed to lie on, without even a bench to sit on or a candle by which to see, and yet these men and women of hope

bore the ordeal complacently, and made the grim old prison resound with their songs in the night. The spirit of dissent was unquenchable.

When the Puritans were driven to organize their meetings in the open spaces around Bristol, it frequently happened that as many as fifteen hundred people would assemble to worship God. Meetings were held as early as four in the morning and at other unlikely hours of the day, that offered the least possibility of disturbance.

The ever-increasing popularity of dissent roused the authorities to suppress it. George Derville was commissioned to be trebly vigilant.

"No stone must be left unturned, Derville," said the Mayor, "that is likely to cover a dissenter. Hunt after them, and when you find them, don't let them slip. Go for the ministers—Gifford, Hardcastle, Thompson of the Castle Church, and Weeks of Lewin's Mead." And warrants for the arrest of these ministers were at once issued.

Weeks, the Presbyterian, and Thomas Hardcastle, for the seventh time in Bristol, were immediately arrested and committed to the Newgate for six months each. Thompson, the Congregational minister, was old and very infirm, and seldom went out to conduct meetings. This limited Derville's chance of arresting him. But Gifford, still young, was dauntless, daring and defiant.

"Gifford must be arrested at all cost," said the Mayor, and a big price was placed upon his head.

Derville marshalled his lieutenants, including Slyman, and pointed out to them the importance of capturing this young and energetic minister.

For weeks they watched and waited at the expected meetings, but none took place. This terribly annoyed

Derville, the Mayor, and Bishop Guy Carlton. Someone suggested there must be treachery amongst the informers, and that some traitor was secretly telling Andrew Gifford where they would be.

But one day when Derville and his men were returning disappointed from Troopers' Hill, they sighted Andrew Gifford returning from Rose Green, where he had preached that afternoon to fifteen hundred people. Andrew was quick to see that he was "spotted," and, taking to his heels, he doubled back by winding paths towards Hanham. His pursuers came hard after him, and were gaining fast upon him when he rushed for refuge into the farm barton of a friendly farmer.

Two minutes later, Derville and his "sleuth-hounds" rushed into the yard, shouting to the farm-hands, "Where's Andrew Gifford? Tell me, where is Andrew Gifford?"

The farmer and his men stood stock-still and speechless, as if petrified.

Seeing a farm-hand quite close to him, carrying a prong of hay, Derville shouted, "Eh, man, where is Andrew Gifford?"

"Well," drawled out the farm-hand thus addressed, "he was here but a bit agone and rushed like mad through the barn doo-er; if you are quick you might catch him. He's a slippery chap, so I've been told." And with that Derville and his men rushed into the barn and disappeared, and Andrew Gifford, in the quick-change disguise of a farm-hand, dressed in the farmer's smock frock and slouch hat, and bending beneath a prong of hay he had just taken from the farmer's hand, passed out of the gate and got clean away.

Knowing that by a new warrant Derville could arrest him anywhere, Andrew was exceedingly careful to keep

himself concealed. However, one day he was recognised by Derville passing through the Froom Gate into the city. Instantly all the gates were closed, and special guards put on duty to arrest him whenever he attempted to return to his home beyond the Lawford's Gate.

Several days passed by, and no Andrew Gifford was detected. Had he once more escaped unnoticed? Still the guards continued to watch the gates.

As it was assumed that he would attempt to escape in some form of disguise, all suspicious characters were detained and examined.

George Derville called round at intervals so as to ensure unslackening vigilance. On the fourth day when he called at the Castle Gate a heavily-coated pedlar who wanted to pass out was being questioned by the guards.

"This seems to be your man, Derville," said the chief guard. "We have been watching him going from house to house in the street, and doubt whether he is really a professional pedlar."

"Gifford is a clever disguise artist, I know," said Derville. "But this is the most elegant make-up I have yet met with. Why, the fellow looks more like a travelling wardrobe than an honest pedlar. Take him into the guard-room and peel off the top coverings, and you will find Andrew Gifford apologising for giving us so much trouble."

In great expectation, Derville himself superintended the unrobing of the protesting pedlar, while the chief guard attended to an old scissor-grinder waiting to sharpen a cutlass for him.

"My word," said the grinder, "it wants polishing as well as grinding. You haven't been doing much with this blade lately, have you?"

"No, but I may do, on this job."

"Right-ho, guard."

At intervals he would pause and speak to the guard.

"You seem to be very alert this morning, guard. What's on?"

"Oh, that sharper, Andrew Gifford, is in the city," said Derville, who had just dismissed the over-robed and protesting pedlar, "and we are keeping a sharp look-out for him."

"You'll need to do that," said the old grinder. "I've heard as how Gifford is terribly sharp-witted, and you've got to get up very early to keep sides with him. You must be careful he doesn't slip through your fingers."

"No fear of that," said the guard. "He won't be able to deceive me with his disguise tricks."

"Well, here's your cutlass, sharpened and polished, and may you never use it to do anybody any harm."

The old grinder took the pence for his labour, and then trundled his creaky grinding barrow through the gates.

When he reached the top of the Old Market he paused, and looking back with an amused air, he saw that the guards were still at the gates, and George Derville waiting to arrest Andrew Gifford.

"Ah," reflected the scissor-grinder, "you guards want something else besides a cutlass sharpened; you want your wits sharpened. But Andrew Gifford won't stop to sharpen them to-day. Good morning, George Derville. I'll go and hide myself in the Glover's house until the hunt is over."

And with that Andrew Gifford and his barrow disappeared down the drive of Lawford's Lodge.

Soon the reports came to Derville that Andrew Gifford had been at Hanham, Rose Green, Troopers' Hill,

Brislington, and several other places. Derville was so incensed that he concocted a false charge, and Andrew Gifford was unexpectedly arrested.

In court Derville swore on oath that he was present at a meeting conducted by Andrew Gifford, and heard him preach. The Mayor, highly delighted, was about to sentence the prisoner, when Edward Terrill rose in court and charged Derville with wilful perjury.

Then turning to the Mayor he said : " There are ten reliable citizens in court who will swear truthfully that Andrew Gifford was not at the meeting, and that it was conducted by another preacher."

Then naming the witnesses, Edward Terrill said : " In the presence of such unimpeachable witnesses, I demand the immediate release of the prisoner."

The Mayor reluctantly admitted the perjury ; and Andrew Gifford was liberated. But George Derville, the perjurer, went scot-free.

Clever as Andrew Gifford was in eluding legitimate arrest, it was not to be expected that he would always succeed, with a host of informers ever about him. At last he was arrested and committed for six months. Derville was delighted.

" Three out of the four ministers are in jail," he exclaimed. " Now I must aim to arrest the fourth, and after him, Edward Terrill, and when these are under lock and key, the citadel of dissent in Bristol will come crashing to the ground."

Thus reasoned the callous George Derville. As he did so he plumed himself upon his success and drank more heavily of the fiery liquors " to keep my head cool," as he chose to explain to his confidential friends.

Whether it was due to Derville's keener scouting or to a miscalculation on the part of the aged minister of

the Castle Church, it is an historical fact that John Thompson, old and broken in health from persistent persecution, was arrested while conducting a service, and committed to six months' imprisonment.

In vain did an eminent physician plead that he might be detained in some convenient house, as his health was so precarious. In vain did his friends offer to go bond for five hundred pounds for his security. In the face of all entreaties he was sent, at the instigation of Bishop Guy Carlton, to Newgate Jail, put into a damp, cold, insanitary cell and left to the mercies of his fellow-prisoners.

Three of these, Weeks, Hardcastle and Gifford, did their utmost to give him comfort. But their utmost was very little, for they too were suffering from the same conditions.

"Edward," said Kathleen one evening in 1675, "what is there you and I can do for the churches? Our four ministers are now away in that horrid Newgate Jail."

"Only three are there now, dear," said Edward solemnly.

"Only three!" exclaimed Kathleen. "Is John Thompson liberated?"

"Yes, dear."

"Oh, won't his people rejoice," exclaimed Kathleen. "Their pleadings for his release were most pathetic. What has led the magistrates to release him?"

"They have not released him, Kathleen, but God has. The news has just come from the prison that John Thompson is dead, and is to be buried to-morrow."

"Dead! And is to be buried to-morrow! But why this unseemly haste to inter him?"

"Such was the nature of his affliction, aggravated by the insanitary conditions of the prison, that it is expedient to hasten his interment. He is to be taken straight from the prison to his grave in St. Philip's Churchyard."

The news was a terrible shock to Kathleen, for she loved this old saintly minister; and so it was to Edward and indeed to all the Puritans in Bristol. But hurried as the interment was, five thousand persons attended, and showed their esteem for the departed man of God.

When the service was over, Edward and Kathleen walked with bowed heads and heavy hearts back to the Castle House.

"Edward," said Kathleen, after a long silence, "what if death should claim the other ministers, who would then minister to the forlorn and scattered churches?"

"You, and I and Grace, dear," said Edward thoughtfully.

"You and I will conduct the services, and Grace, with her ever-ready pen, will send messages of comfort, hope and cheer to all the churches."

"But what if you are taken, Edward?"

"Then you and Grace will carry on, and God will make the remnant invincible."

"And Edward, supposing I am arrested also?"

"Then Grace alone will become the invincible one, and see the promise fulfilled, 'A little one shall become a thousand'."

It was not long after this conversation, when death claimed another minister. Thomas Hardcastle served his full term of six months, and on his release went direct to the Broadmead meeting and delivered an eloquent exhortation. The members listened with

rapturous feelings. It was a happy reunion of pastor and people ; but the happiness was not to be for long. Suddenly, the accumulated blows of prison sufferings broke down his iron constitution, and Thomas Hardcastle, the champion of a hundred battles, passed into his rest.

This was a great blow to Edward Terrill. He had counted on this strong man, in the prime of life, continuing in the conflict, but this hope was shattered by his premature death.

In a momentary mood of depression, he recalled Kathleen's fears, " What, if all the ministers die, who will carry on then ? " And it was Kathleen now, who whispered at his side, " You and I and Grace will carry on. Yes, Edward, you and I and Grace will carry on, until reinforcements come."

" And so we will, God helping us," replied the dauntless Edward Terrill.

With a brave heart he rallied the church, and sought once more for another pastor. And when George Fownes was led to join the heroic band, Andrew Gifford was once more free, and challenging, as vigorously as ever, the hammer-blows of George Derville and Robert Slyman.

CHAPTER XXI

HOME

"I hear a voice you cannot hear,
Which says I must not stay,
I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away."

—*Thomas Tickell.*

IT was a lovely summer's morning when the *Flying Eagle* sailed into Port Royal Harbour. The face of Captain Boniface was wreathed with smiles. All the way across the Atlantic he had been unusually cheerful, but now he smiled and chatted and was brimming over with fun and merriment.

"I'm no inquisitor, mates. I'm no troubler of people's conscience unless they have a conscience to step upon my corns, and then I just shout and knock them off. I don't need to quiz on those Puritans to find out what sort of folk they are. Their qualities, like the perfumes of these West India Islands, greet us before we meet them, and proclaim in every silent breath that they, like the good wives King Solomon wrote about, will do you good and not evil all the days of your life.

"I tell you, mates, these Puritans are the floods that are sweeping away the riff-raff of priestly superstitions, and when the waters subside, we shall have a world in which there will be no frenzied priests going crazy and clapping people into prison, because they have notions better than their own, but sensible men and women dwelling together in the fear of the Lord.

"You men can keep your priests if you like them, I'm not going to interfere with you. Everybody to his own taste, is my motto. But when the real thing comes to me and tells me by the milk of human kindness that God is no respecter of places or people, but will work His royal will, in a humble conventicle, and through some humble Christian who feareth Him, I want no more argument. I doff my hat to the genuine article, I do, and become a Puritan straight away."

So spoke the happy, amiable Captain Boniface to his mates. Some were serious and some chuckled, but all were agreed that since the Captain took his first batch of Puritans to Jamaica he had been a different man.

The *Flying Eagle* had been expected at Port Royal for several days, and every day the returning exiles had gone to the Look-out Hill to catch the first glimpse of the vessel that would take them back to England.

The roll-call disclosed serious gaps in their ranks. Death had been busy during the years of their banishment. But the most lamented was the death of the young "doctors," from fever contracted while nursing two fever-stricken slaves. All the exiles had been nursed in turn by these two young and zealous souls, who never counted any case too dangerous or too difficult, but went forth daily to nurse the sick and to speak to the dying of the love of God.

Their child Selina, generally called Salinie, was the pet of the party. She was the image of her mother, as Muriel was the image of the older Selina. Sweet and winsome, and full of childish fun and frolic, she gave wings to the waiting hours by her contagious laughter and play.

Early in the morning the white sails of the *Flying Eagle* were seen from the Look-out Hill approaching the

harbour. The sight was hailed with shouts of joy, mingled with prayers of gratitude and praise.

When the vessel drew nearer, Captain Boniface doffed his cap, and shouted : " Cheerio ! Cheerio ! I'll be on the wharf in a jiffy. I'm bringing ' Home, sweet home ' to the lot of you. How are the young ' doctors ' ? And how is their little sunbeam Salinie ? "

The distance was too great for them to speak the sad news to the Captain, so they waved their hands in acknowledgment.

As the vessel came nearer the Captain scanned the central figures critically, but something seemed to have gone wrong. He could see the four senior " doctors " and little Salinie standing between Selina and Martha, but where were the young " doctors," Maurice and Muriel ?

In vain he ran his eyes through the Puritan company, but no Maurice or Muriel could he see. And when at last the vessel was moored, and the stout-hearted Captain stepped ashore, and learned the news of their tragic death, he broke down and sobbed like a child. The whole company wept afresh over their loss, when they saw this strong man bowed in tears.

Then Lionel took Salinie to the Captain, and putting the child's hand into the horny hand of the weeping man, said, " Captain, our two dear children, Maurice and Muriel, have passed into rest, and this is their legacy for our comfort and joy."

The Captain clasped the child to his heart and said, " Thank God for your father and mother, Salinie. They were the genuine article, they were. They brought the light of heaven into my dark old heart, and I have been walking in paradise ever since."

Then kissing the wondering child, he said to the four "doctors," who were deeply moved at the Captain's grief, "Your children did a great work, but their greatest job was when they led Captain Boniface to look into the face of Jesus Christ."

Captain Boniface was not the only one who grieved over the death of the young "doctors." From all over the island came tributes to their devoted services. Lives which had been despaired of were nursed back to health and strength. Not alone in the halls of the rich, but in the huts of the slaves and criminals, miracles had been wrought. And their simple Puritan faith had brought to many a new sense of God, and a new conception of human obligation to walk worthy of the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The senior "doctors" had likewise endeared themselves to the islanders, and much sympathy was felt for them in their bereavement.

From all parts of Jamaica, masters, overseers and favoured slaves came to see them start for home, and to say good-bye.

Said one old settler: "You came to us as despised strangers, but you return as our much-beloved friends. You have shown us what a beautiful thing the Christian life can be."

"Your departure," moaned one of the slaves, "is like de blotting out of de sun at noonday. It will leave us dark and lonesome."

"Not so," said Lionel kindly. "You will have with you One who will ever be your light and companion."

Just then there was a movement in the crowd on the wharf-side, the company parted, and two slaves pushed their way to the front, and falling down at the feet of the "doctors," said: "We are de darkies, massa, for

whom de 'doctors' died. We got better, but de 'doctors' go to hebben. We love de 'doctors' because dey loved de darkies; and de darkies love Jesus and will go to hebben to see de 'doctors' dare."

Captain Boniface smiled amidst his tears.

"I told you people of Jamaica that I had brought you the genuine article. And here are the proofs. Now let me say to you slaves, overseers and masters, 'Go and be the genuine article to others, and very soon this West India island will become a genuine paradise on earth'."

Slowly the vessel moved away from her moorings. Farewells were shouted across the widening waters, and when the *Flying Eagle* began to dip her wings beneath the horizon, there arose on land and sea a united chorus of praise to the all-wise and loving God.

As the chorus of praise died away on the Caribbean Sea, another began to rise in the English Channel, where the home-coming of the exiles was joyously awaited.

Happily, it was in the lull of the storm when the exiles returned, and all the Puritans were free to meet them openly, and welcome them back to their homes.

Edward and Kathleen sailed down the river as far as the Avon's mouth to catch the first glimpse of the approaching vessel. The booming of the guns, the Captain's prearranged signal, announced her arrival in the Channel, and a few minutes later the *Flying Eagle* was seen rounding the headland and making for the river.

The exiles, crowding the foredeck, all eager to catch the first glimpse of home, saw the waiting boat, and waved their joyous recognition of Edward and Kathleen.

The voyage home had been wonderfully recuperating, yet the pale, wasted cheeks told their own stories of the hard life upon the plantations. Edward and Kathleen were quick to notice the changed appearance of all their friends, and as soon as they got on board, Kathleen rushed into the arms of her parents, and there learned the sorrowful news concerning Maurice and Muriel.

Never was a vessel more eagerly awaited than the *Flying Eagle*, and never in the whole maritime history of Bristol were overseas travellers more enthusiastically welcomed than those Puritans who for seven long years had suffered exile. The absence of Maurice and Muriel was noticed by the crowd. The news of their death, and that of other dear friends, passed from one to another, and the joy of the home-coming was tempered by this over-shadowing bereavement.

Captain Boniface had craved the privilege of accompanying Salinie and her grandparents to the Castle House.

"Most certainly, Captain," the grandparents had said. "Your presence will fill the cup of our happiness to overflowing."

It was a happy arrangement, for with Salinie by his side, the joyous-hearted Captain was able to relieve the tension the sad news had created.

Addressing the sorrowing company, he said: "You may well weep over the death of Maurice and Muriel. It 'minds me that I cried like a child when I heard of it on the other side. They were great souls. They have left their mark on Jamaica, I can tell you. You should have heard what those darkies said about them.

"I'm not going to take any more Puritans to purgatory. I've done with the sea. I'm going to make my home with you in Bristol. I owe my soul to the

'doctors,' and as they can't come back to carry on, I will take their place and fight with you for liberty. They were the genuine article, I can tell you.

"It's no use for priests to go to Jamaica and say, 'Puritans are a sad, sour, long-faced, kill-joy, good-for-nothing folk,' for the people of Jamaica will say, 'You are talking about yourselves, mates; we never knew happiness until we knew those Puritans; they have a happiness you know nothing about.'

"Look at this child! Did you ever see a merrier rose-bud than this? She's the rolled-up sunbeams of the Indies, full of sunshine and rippling laughter. She's a regular little songster, and will sing all your troubles away."

Salinie hung on the Captain's arm and smiled at the company before her. It was a smile which brought consolation to many hearts.

Very glad was Grace to see her parents and Kathleen's parents home again. She heard the sorrowful news with quiet resignation. And when Captain Boniface presented Salinie to her in his own cheerful way, saying: "Your sister Muriel sends her love to you, my dear, in this charming child; she will turn your night into day, and warble away your every ache and pain; she is a merry little songster"; Grace was constrained to smile through her tears, and drawing Salinie to her heart, she loved her for dear Muriel's sake.

But while the Puritans were now free to rejoice over the return of the exiles, they were very conscious more trouble was brewing. The law of banishment had expired and was not to be renewed, but the Conventicle Acts, still on the Statute Book, were expected to be again enforced against them.

"You return," said Edward, "in the lull between the storms. I do not wish to alarm you, but the worst is yet to be. The word has gone forth that the next Mayor must be no milk-and-water citizen, but a regular fire-brand, who must use every legal device to stamp out Puritanism in the city, and every succeeding Mayor is to be a fire-eater too, until the city is purged of its schismatics. You have returned home to exchange one form of persecution for another."

"And we are ready," exclaimed Lionel. "God willing, we are ready to go on, however severe the persecution, until religious freedom is won."

Andrew Gifford voiced the solemn determination of the Pithay Church to persevere.

And George Fownes, who had taken up the mantle of Thomas Hardcastle, said on behalf of Broadmead, "Not as long as one member remaineth will this church cease to fight for freedom."

Dorothy Hazzard, aged and infirm, leaning heavily upon her staff, said : "Friends, I am pleased to see you home before I die. For nearly forty years I have been one with you in this great struggle. We have fought and suffered side by side. I had hoped that before now we should have entered our 'Promised Land.' We are yet a long way from it, but every day it draweth nearer. I shall not live to enter it, though to-night from my Pisgah Mount I see it.

"The Lord is at hand. I shall soon be gathered home. You have fought valiantly.

"I welcome our new pastor, George Fownes. Pithay and Broadmead Churches will be banner bearers in the final campaign. Some of you will fall in the struggle. Some of you will witness its triumph. In that day,

carry your honours with the same modesty you now carry your arms.

"Tell your children and children's children how great was the price we paid for their liberty. They will be free-born, but must never cease to prize the boon for which we have striven. Pray that the victory, when it comes, may mean the enlargement of the Church and the salvation of the world.

"Good-bye, good-bye . . . good-bye."

As she spoke her strength failed. She looked up, and a joyous smile wreathed her calm, benevolent face. She had seen the Lord.

Then with failing breath she added, "Come . . . Lord Jesus . . . for . . . Thy . . . servant . . . waiteth." She faltered and would have fallen, but loving hands supported her. And that night the soul of Dorothy Hazzard, the heroine of numberless battles, the intrepid leader of the Free Churches; the tender-hearted Mother in Israel, like a shock of corn, fully ripe, went home to be with God.

In the Castle House, the Listuns and Wakefields met for a family reunion. All were present except the dear ones lying in their distant grave, and Harry Wakefield, who with John Myles and the Ilston Church had settled at Swanzea in the Old Colony. In a letter to his sister Grace he told of their happy freedom from persecution and of the admirable way the charter of religious liberty was working in Rhode Island. "This idea of Roger Williams is spreading throughout New England. May it soon come to Old England and put an end to all your sufferings."

"It is for that idea to take root in Old England that we are now striving," said Lionel. "If it is to succeed we are to play a more strenuous part than ever. The

word has gone forth that dissent must be exterminated. The Mayor-elect is making preparations for a religious conquest that will immortalise his mayoralty. It is for us to immortalise our religious faith and practice by a resistance that will know no abatement."

"And so we will, father," said Tom and Margaret together. "We have lost heavily in London, but we have not lost our faith, nor our will to win."

"Nor have we, father," said Gerald and Rebecca. "Our dear pastor, Abraham Cheare, has died on Drake's Island after years of fearful privations, and though the Plymouth Council is resolute in suppressing his followers, we are resolute in perpetuating the faith for which he died."

"Derville, Slyman and the Mayor-elect," said Edward, "are at this very moment making their plans for an intensive drive that is to sweep us into oblivion. Kathleen and I saw them talking together outside the prison gates, as we came along, and we knew from their guilty looks that we were under discussion."

"In common with our courageous ministers and fellow-members, in London, Plymouth, and here in Bristol, we accept the challenge of our adversaries, and God helping us, we will not pause in the conflict until we have won."

"Children," said Selina, "our motto must be, 'Forward, and ever forward, with never a look behind'."

When the last fierce conflict began the Wakefields were ready.

CHAPTER XXII

ST. JAMES' FAIR

"The world is all a fleeting show
For man's illusion given ;
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,
There's nothing true but heaven."
—*Moore.*

THE Mayor of 1681 had scarcely donned his mayoral robes before he issued the order that all conventicles must be closed and dissent in the city crushed out of existence.

This mayoral blast was followed by swift executive action. The conventicles were shut, barred and bolted against the dissenters. Meetings in them or anywhere else were strictly forbidden. Everybody was to obey the law and go to church, or the maximum fines or imprisonment would be imposed. This was no idle threat, for a hundred and fifty dissenters were fined twenty pounds each per month for not attending church. The battle had begun.

On their return from Jamaica, William and Martha Listun went to live at Conham House, under the Hanham Woods, and Edward and Kathleen removed from Corn Street to Lawford's Lodge. This double move proved very advantageous to the Puritans.

Lawford's Lodge gave Edward greater freedom of action outside the city, and Conham House, the fifteenth century mansion, in the centre of Conham Park, adorned with magnificent trees and shrubs, bounded on three

sides by the winding Avon, and flanked by wooded hills, was the most sequestered spot in Gloucestershire.

At no angle could the house be seen from a distance. The only indication of a human habitation was when the winter log fires sent up their curling columns of smoke above the tree-tops.

It was as perfect a retreat as the human heart could wish, or the ingenuity of man working hand in hand with nature could devise.

In earlier times the site of Conham House had been a smugglers' den. The hidden vaults, arched cellars and subterranean passages, which, with all the modifications of the passing years, still exist, together with the name of the vale—Crew's Hole—are sufficient evidences of the old seafaring community.

For many years the smugglers had ceased to resort there, and the mansion built over the vaults and cellars of the den, had become the peaceful home of honest citizens.

This was the retreat William Liston bought on his return from Jamaica, and this became the retreat of the hunted ministers, and the headquarters of the united Baptist churches.

At Conham House, in all kinds of weather, it is recorded, the members "met in peace and enjoyed their privileges."

The attempt of the Puritans to break down the barriers and re-open their conventicles proved very disastrous, for Derville and Slyman, with the constables, were on them immediately, and though Edward's skilful management secured the escape of many, yet he and Kathleen, Lionel and Selina, Pastor Fownes and fourteen others were arrested, and the buildings, after

the furniture had been smashed and burnt, were strongly barricaded to prevent further entrance.

For a long time the prisoners were detained at the Newgate, awaiting their trial. To their great surprise George Derville was brought in as a debtor prisoner.

Derville, by his intemperate habits, had squandered away his resources, and was now head over ears in debt. His creditors had borne with him until their patience was exhausted, and now he was committed to prison until his debts were paid.

Edward expressed his regret at seeing his adversary in such a dejected condition, and offered to confer with his friends to see what could be done to make him solvent. Derville showed no sign of gratitude for this suggestion.

That evening, as on former evenings, the Puritans held a service in the prison, and George Fownes preached to all his fellow-prisoners and led them in singing the 46th Psalm. Derville flew into a towering rage, and posted off a message to the Mayor in hot haste, telling him of the outrageous proceedings in prison. Down came the Mayor, Sheriff, Bishop, and Slyman, who, for the time being, had succeeded Derville.

The Sheriff stormed at the jailer and threatened to dismiss him for allowing Puritan services in prison. Edward reminded the Sheriff that "the law allowed a family, with five more, to meet, and we being one family may surely meet." He also reminded the Lord Bishop that it was illegal to imprison them for praying.

The Bishop angrily asserted that it was not, and pulled the Act out of his pocket to prove his assertion; but as no such thing could be found in it, he put the Act in his pocket, and went off in a rage.

Derville got his reward. "He is too good a fellow to be cooped up in this pestilential den," said the Bishop. And so his debt was paid for him, and he became once more the chief informer.

The next day Edward and Kathleen were ordered to leave and to regard themselves as prisoners in their own house. Though Edward protested against preferential treatment, he was compelled to accept it.

Edward's wealth was said to be the reason for this favouritism, but shrewd observers suspected that it was the fear that, while in prison, he would turn the tables upon his persecutors by exposing illegal proceedings. Edward was a lawyer in all but name, and many times had brought the machinations of his adversaries to naught by proving they were without legal foundation.

George Fownes, after six weeks' detention, was taken to London to be tried. Through a technical flaw in the charge sheet, he was dismissed pending the preparation of another warrant. This unexpected release delighted his friends, who took every precaution to prevent the execution of the new warrant.

The other prisoners were sentenced to long terms in the Newgate Jail. Not many weeks elapsed before some were prostrate with fever. In their delirium they called for Lionel and Selina, who undertook to nurse them, and in doing so showed such skill and tenderness as to astonish the jailer. Their first act was to cleanse the filthy rooms in which the sufferers were lying, and to get in all the fresh air the small grated windows would allow.

Though they worked incessantly to fight the fever and save the lives of their friends, yet some were seen

to be hopeless from the first, and in a few days exchanged the cell for the house of many mansions.

The jailer, more humane than his superiors, requested the two "nurses" to go into the poor debtors' quarter and see whether they could do anything for some poor sufferers there. They did so, and became acquainted with a condition of things utterly unimaginable.

The insanitary cells were full of men, women and children destitute of food, scantily clad, full of disease, and pernicious sores, aggravated by neglect and dirt.

Some of these debtors had been there for years, had seen many of their fellow-prisoners succumb to their privations, and knew that sooner or later they too would follow. They had no hope of release, as they had no means of paying their debts. Their only means of subsistence was what the public chose to put in the poor prisoners' aid box at the prison gate. But this was painfully spasmodic and meagre.

Lionel and Selina were able to give much relief to these poor sufferers, and though forbidden to preach, never failed to accompany their ministrations to the body with loving words about Jesus, the great Physician of the soul. And many were the prisoners who found comfort, soul-healing and deliverance at the hands of these two faithful disciples.

During those months spent in the Newgate Jail, batch after batch of Puritans were brought in, thus indicating the indomitable spirit of dissent.

"You do not follow up your drives with adequate severity in prison," said the Bishop one day to the Mayor and Sheriff. "Put on the screw, make them feel the terror of prison life. That will check them."

"Your Grace need not worry yourself on that score," replied the Sheriff. "Since I had my last interview

with our gracious King, we have put on the screw to the last thread the law will let us. Said his gracious Majesty to me, when talking about this Puritan pest : ' Sheriff Knight, let the prison be prison.' If your Grace wishes to sample the severity of prison regulations, you have only to assume you are a Puritan for one day, and the jailer Turnbull will make you wince."

Then folding back his unbuttoned coat and hooking his thumbs in the armholes of his vest, the Sheriff, swelling visibly with the thought of his intimacy with royalty, said, " Your Grace need not fear there is any lack of severity. King Charles' last word to me was : ' Sheriff Knight, remember, the prison must be prison,' and I am too loyal a subject not to respect the command of so illustrious a King.

" We have got the Wakefields and a crowd of others under lock and key, and I am planning a run up to London to interview the King and the Duke of York with the view of obtaining a warrant to keep them in prison for life.

" Your Grace may rely upon the Mayor and Sheriff doing their duty."

This boastful speech was interrupted by the arrival of George Derville, who announced to these high and mighty dignitaries of the city that the Puritans were organising a rally at the forthcoming St. James' Fair. Robert Slyman had reported a conversation between Edward Terrill and William Listun to the effect that a Mr. Prosser, an eloquent preacher from Benjamin Keach's church, London, was coming to preach publicly at the Fair.

" That he never shall," hissed out the Mayor.

" He'll never dare to attempt it a second time," said the Sheriff.

"But he must not be allowed to do it a first time," frantically spoke the Bishop.

The trio emphatically declared there should be no preaching at the Fair.

"We look to you, Derville, with Slyman and the constables, to prevent such a calamity as the revival of Puritanism in the city, and to arrest all the schismatics who attempt to break the King's laws. Have no regard for age, sex or position. The law-breakers must be arrested and punished."

Derville made a solemn vow that as far as he could prevent it, there should be no meeting at the Fair, or there would be such a round-up of Puritans as would fill the prisons to overflowing.

The trio exchanged glances. They had no doubt about the issue.

St. James' Fair had a European reputation. It was the largest and most important fair in the world. Merchants came to it from all parts of England, Ireland and Wales, and remote towns and cities of every European country, to sell their merchandise.

The Fair was originated in 1238 by the Bishop of Worcester as a Feast of Relics, and was held during the week of Pentecost. Fifteen days' indulgence was granted to all who visited the Feast and presented alms to the Priory of St. James.

The Feast was later changed into the Fair and was held during the first fortnight in September. It was accompanied by every kind of wild revelry and demoralising excitement. It persisted until 1838, when a more conscientious City Council refused to tolerate it, and summarily ordered its abolition.

In 1681 the Fair was at the height of its popularity, and repugnant to self-respecting citizens. Puritan

merchants deplored the lewdness of the crowds who assembled, and encouraged every attempt made by their local brethren to evangelise the visitors.

Mr. Prosser, of London, was one of the outstanding preachers of the day, whose eloquent discourses drew large audiences whenever he was announced to preach. The depleted band of Puritans in Bristol availed themselves of Mr. Prosser's services to purge the Fair and rally the members not as yet deprived of their liberty. But none knew better than Mr. Prosser and Edward the grave risks they would incur.

Among the Puritans who attended the Fair were many who desired to hear the Bristol pastors, Andrew Gifford and George Fownes. Their names were household names, and their praises were sung by Puritans far and wide. But as warrants had been issued for their arrest, and the next commitment might mean life-long imprisonment, the members had urged them not to appear, but to hold themselves ready to conduct secret meetings elsewhere.

As was expected, the announcement of Mr. Prosser's service drew an immense crowd to the paddock on the rising ground behind St. James's Church.

Grace Wakefield, who had not been out for many months, expressed a wish to attend the Fair service. Edward and Kathleen readily fell in with the suggestion. Since her parents' imprisonment in the Newgate, Grace had visibly failed. All the colour had gone out of her wasted face. It was a great grief to her to think of them in that dreadful prison, and yet she essayed to keep bright and speak cheerfully and hopefully to all her friends. With Bessie Atkins and Kathleen riding in the pony chaise, and Edward leading the pony, they proceeded from the Castle House to the paddock.

The streets were thronged with sightseers, who stared at the equipage and its occupants. Grace was evidently the arresting figure. The years of continual suffering, nobly borne, had developed a most striking personality. Her broad, pensive brow, and large liquid eyes, indicated exceptional intellectual strength, while the smiles that lit up her countenance when she recognised friends or met objects of interest by the way, told of the depth and quality of her sympathies.

Many were the enquiries of passers-by. So seldom was she seen outside the Castle House that only a very few Bristolians knew her.

Derville and Slyman were at the Newgate watching for Andrew Gifford and George Fownes when the carriage came up to the gate.

Edward greeted the chief informer in a semi-bantering way: "Still on business, George? You ought to be thriving after all the arrests you have made lately. But if you would only go steady, George, and become thrifty, you would be spared the indignity of any future residence in the Newgate."

This was Edward's tilt at Derville's incarceration for debt.

Derville flinched. Edward was the only man in the city of whom he was afraid. His machinations had been so often frustrated by this clever layman that he would fain avoid him.

"Business is business, Terrill," he blurted out, feeling he must say something. "Every man to his trade. When Gifford and Fownes are out of action, Edward, your turn will come, and then you will find the City Fathers not so chicken-hearted towards you as they appear to-day."

" Ah well, George, the prizes are placed high for you this time, but there are higher prizes than informers' fees. Gifford and Fownes are good men. You do not expect me to wish you luck in catching them, do you ? But all that is good in life I wish you, George, as I did at our first meeting at Baptist Mills."

While this conversation was proceeding, Robert Slyman's attention was fixed upon Grace. He had never seen such a striking personality before. He saw the marks of intense suffering in every line of her face. He saw those lines deepen and darken when reference was made to Newgate Prison, and the desire of the informer to get Gifford, Fownes and Edward incarcerated there. He saw too how those deep dark lines brightened when Edward spoke of his good wishes for Derville. He also saw that her body was badly deformed, and wondered who she was, and from whence she came.

Her helpless condition filled him with pain and pity. He knew Kathleen, for he had often seen her with Edward, and more than once had arrested her with her husband ; but he could not surmise who her companion could be.

As soon as they had turned into Merchant Street, and were out of sight, he said to Derville, " Who is that invalid lady ? What a noble face she has. She strikes me at first glance as being a beautiful character. What a pity it is she is so badly deformed, and apparently suffering much pain."

Derville looked Slyman steadily in the face and said, " Do you mean to say you don't recognise her, Slyman ? "

" No, I can't remember ever seeing her before."

" I know you have travelled about a great deal, Slyman, but I should have thought you could never have forgotten her."

" Her ? But I have never seen her before."

" Oh yes, you have. Put on your considering cap, man. Don't you remember the raid on Dorothy Hazzard's house ? "

" Yes."

" And the wench you tried to 'lope with down the Pithay alley ? "

" Yes."

" And the knock-down blow by Lionel Wakefield that made you drop the girl ? "

" Yes."

" And your job at the demolition of the Castle ? "

" Yes."

" And your attempt to murder the Commissioner ? "

" Yes."

" And the trap you set for him to fall into the dungeon ? "

" Yes."

" And his daughter Grace, who fell into the dungeon while playing ? "

" Yes."

" Well, that noble-looking lady you are enquiring about is Grace Wakefield, who fell into that dungeon, and who for the past thirty years has been a helpless sufferer."

Slyman was dumbfounded.

" You have to-day looked upon a little bit of your own handiwork in the bygone years, Slyman. You set the trap for the father, but it caught the poor girl, and then you bolted from the city."

" I remember her as a girl," said Slyman, with tears coming into his eyes. " I remember what a bright, active girl she was, and how she would come and talk to me about the Castle, its grand tournaments and

royal visitors. And has she been suffering like this all these years, Derville? "

" Yes."

" Derville, I deeply grieve now over that murderous act. I have seen to-day in that woman's face that which will fill me with sorrow as long as I live. I would gladly lose my sight if I could now undo that wrong and restore that woman to normal health and strength."

As Slyman spoke, his voice trembled with a great emotion.

" Don't talk nonsense, Slyman. And don't become a weakling, now we are practically finishing our life's work. A few more months of drive, and the Puritans will all be in prison, and you and I will be held up as the real deliverers of the city from the Puritan plague. We must not become squeamish about our handiwork because a few wenches are caught in the net and suffer a little bit."

" Derville, I disown that handiwork as mine."

" It was yours."

" It was you who put me up to it. It was you who prompted me to set those traps. When I wanted to abandon the murderous plan, you goaded me on. You have been my evil genius throughout my life, but now we'll part. I'll have no more of this damnable business of hunting and trapping decent people."

" The look on that suffering woman's face tells me that neither Bishop Guy Carlton, nor Sheriff Knight, nor the Mayor, nor the whole crew of Anglican persecutors can equal the beauty and grandeur of that woman's soul. If I knew the secret of such a triumphing religion, I'd take it forthwith, even though the fires of Smithfield were rekindled and stirred to seven times their wonted intensity to frizzle me up."

With that Slyman tore off at great speed. In vain Derville tried to get him back, but neither bribes nor threats availed anything.

Derville was so unmanned by this unexpected castigation from his hitherto servile colleague, that he strolled away from the gate to the Lamb Inn, near the Lawford's Lodge, and there drowned his troubled thoughts in spirituous liquors. Gifford, Fownes, the Fair service, the ruffian crowd of interrupters he was to organise, the round-up and capture of Puritans were all forgotten, as he sat and drank in the inn kitchen.

Bishop Guy Carlton, Sheriff Knight and the Mayor had posted themselves in a garden summer-house adjoining the paddock, where, unseen, they could watch the grand round-up of Puritans Derville was expected to make.

They saw the dissenters and their sympathisers assemble in the paddock until they formed a company some two thousand strong. They saw Mr. Prosser, of London, and other Puritan ministers of great distinction and spiritual power come in as a body all absorbed in conversation with each other. They saw Edward Terrill and his party enter. All three were struck with the remarkable personality of Grace Wakefield.

" 'Tis a thousand pities that accident befell her in her youth," said the Mayor. " She would have shone in any circle, however exalted. Her intellectual powers and feminine sympathies surpass even those of that remarkable woman, Dorothy Hazzard."

" It is a merciful providence," coldly observed the Bishop, " that she has been restricted, for a second Dorothy Hazzard would have been the ruination of the Church."

“ I am with you there, Bishop,” said Sheriff Knight. “ There is no knowing the harm Dorothy Hazzard has done in starting this Puritan faction, and a second edition of Dorothyism would have meant the closing down of your Bishopric, and the discarding of your mitre, apron and gaiters, of which you are so proud,” and with that he tapped the Bishop’s gaiters with his silver-mounted cane.

What the Bishop would have said further was stopped by the immense crowd singing the one hundredth Psalm. The prohibited service had begun at the Fair.

CHAPTER XXIII

UNEXPECTED HAPPENINGS

"O, many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant !
And many a word at random spoken,
May soothe, or wound a heart that's broken."
—*Scott.*

THE trio who had placed themselves in a commanding position to watch the rounding-up of the Puritans at the Fair soon discovered they were in for more than they desired. They could not see without hearing, and from their hidden look-out they were chagrined to hear Puritan doctrines of undiluted strength and quality.

Speaker after speaker in fine flowing periods of eloquence spoke of the feebleness of the religion established and endowed by law, and contrasted it with the free, virile, self-supporting religion of the Puritans.

Puritanism was a philosophy of life that changed the centre of interest from self to God. It was as revolutionary in religion as Copernicanism in astronomy. It restored God to His rightful place in the religious life. It discarded the man-made ceremonies of the Church as worthless appendages and threw the soul back upon the verities of God's word and the redeeming work of the one and only Saviour. Its motto was: "What saith the Lord?" Puritanism cleanses the life as a river cleanses the marshes, and makes its soil sweet and fertile to produce the flowers and graces of the spiritual world.

Puritanism was not holden to any state or secular system, its respiratory organs required unrestricted liberty in worship.

Neither King nor Bishop, Mayor nor Sheriff has any authority in the domain of another man's soul. Liberty is the atmosphere of the Spirit of God. "For where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty."

The one who gave the fullest expression to this philosophy of religion was Mr. Prosser, of London, whose deep, sonorous voice was like the bombardment of an obsolete citadel.

The trio in the summer-house shook before the withering fire. It was unpalatable news for them to hear that the Puritan philosophy of religion was true and theirs permeated with untruths. But neither was disposed to challenge it in an open and honourable debate with the Puritans.

All three fumed with indignation, the Bishop most of all.

"Oh, where is Derville and his constables?" he impatiently cried. "Why are they not here to stop these stupid fanatics? Why are our ears to be filled with these nostrums?"

"What's on now?" exclaimed the Sheriff, when Mr. Prosser had finished his discourse.

"I declare," said the astonished Mayor, "it's Wakefield's invalid daughter addressing the crowd."

"And what a death-like stillness has come over the crowd!" exclaimed the equally astonished Sheriff.

Yes, Grace Wakefield, whose carriage Edward had brought up close to the improvised platform, was addressing the meeting.

"My dear friends and neighbours, I cannot refrain from saying a few words at this point in the programme.

Our souls have been stirred into ecstasy by the addresses of the different speakers. Puritanism is indeed a great soul-cleansing religion. It harms no one, and brings the breath of God into human life.

"We had no desire to separate from the Established Church. We had hoped to have been the leaven within the Church, leavening it until the whole was leavened.

"My beloved parents, whom you all know, and who are incarcerated in yonder grim prison, loved the Church, and were truly grieved to leave it, but it was so anti-Christian in spirit and practice, that they had no alternative, if they would remain true to their convictions.

"Their only crime is, that they, being free citizens, have exercised their right to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. They have ever lived honourably before you, and sought in numberless ways to promote the good of the city.

"Though wronged, like their fellow prisoners, they bear no malice towards their persecutors, but daily pray for them and their city, that it may become the city of God on earth.

"Restrain us not in our religious exercises; we are not your enemies but your sincere friends.

"I appeal to the Mayor, the Sheriff, the Lord Bishop of Bristol, and all who are actively opposed to us, to stop this insane persecution. It cannot succeed, it never will succeed, unless our persecutors ruthlessly exterminate thousands of their fellow-citizens. Will you allow that? Will you allow such a colossal injustice to stain for ever the reputation of your far-famed and ancient city?

"You cannot, you will not. You will see to it that this persecution must stop, not only in Bristol, but in

London, Plymouth, Exeter, and in every part of our beloved land, from whence the merchants to this Fair have come to-day. Are you ready to help us?

"We are ready.

"I am ready. If anyone has to suffer for this day's proceedings, then here am I, a broken and a suffering woman, but ready to pay my quota towards the emancipation of the Church of Jesus Christ. Friends, will you not help us to rectify a grievous wrong? Will you not help us to make religion free and sweet and pure?"

The speaker threw out her arms in an appealing attitude. Her whole frame shook with emotion, then her arms fell limp upon her lap, her head dropped forward, and Grace Wakefield lapsed into silence.

The crowd of listeners were electrified. Her voice, clear as a bell, had reached to the outermost fringe of the vast audience. Women wept. Men furtively brushed away their tears.

From the crowd there rose a murmur of protest against the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, which found articulation in air-rending shouts:

"Down with Popery."

"Down with High Anglicanism."

"Down with all restrictions on the conventicles."

"Let the godly live in peace."

The spirited speech of Grace Wakefield sent reverberations throughout the country, and though the church in the wilderness had yet a long way to go before it reached its Canaan, the response of the crowd at St. James' Fair made it more certain than ever that it would eventually reach its promised land.

The trio in the summer-house were startled. The Bishop drew his robes about him and enquired of the

Mayor and Sheriff very heatedly why they did not speed up Derville and the constables to stop such unlawful proceedings.

"I will hold you both responsible for this day's contempt of His Majesty's wishes."

Hearing a fresh outburst of protests by the crowd, and fearing they might be discovered in their hiding place, the trio hurried away to look for Derville, and ascertain the reason he did not arrest the Puritans.

Very tenderly Kathleen threw her arms around Grace's shoulders as her face remained buried in her lap, and softly whispered, "God bless you, dear. You have made an appeal to-day that will be heard all over England. Come away, dear, for you are tired."

Grace raised her head and looked into the face of her companion.

"I'm better now, Kathleen. Something seemed to snap here in my breast ; my heart is lighter now."

Bessie Atkins very gently wrapped a mantle around her exhausted mistress, and Edward, at a sign from Kathleen, led the carriage from the field. They were followed by the tear-dimmed eyes of the crowd as they slowly moved away.

Grace had struck chords which vibrated with sympathy. She had made a host of people say, "This persecution must cease. Her parents must be released. The Mayor, Sheriff and Bishop will have to stop this persistent hunt for honest people."

But other eyes than those of the crowd followed Grace out of the paddock : those were the eyes of Robert Slyman. In his mood of depression following his break with Derville, he wandered aimlessly about the meadows,

full of the consuming fire of remorse. Unconsciously and unobserved he drew near to the paddock just as Grace began speaking.

The sight of the woman he had so wickedly invalidated for life, was like a dagger cutting into his heart. He heard every word she spoke, from behind the hedge. He saw her head drop into her lap, and Kathleen's tender attentions. He saw her maid wrap her mantle about her shoulders as carefully as any mother. He saw her utterly exhausted condition, and was filled with anguish and self-loathing.

"Oh, that I could atone for my diabolical crime!" he cried in the bitterness of his soul. "Oh, that I could undo the wickedness of my youth!"

He moved away, and continued his aimless wandering. He could not endure the sight of his folly any longer.

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Very slowly Edward led the party from the paddock into Barr's Lane, and on to Lawford's Lodge. Kathleen had prevailed upon Grace to come and stay at the Lodge until she regained her strength.

As the party neared the end of Redcross Lane, they encountered the Lord Bishop, Mayor and Sheriff coming from the Lamb Inn, where they had been directed to seek for Derville. They found him there stupidly intoxicated and unable to give any coherent account of his failure to round up the Puritans, beyond some senseless jargon about Slyman and a girl that had completely upset his plans.

The three dignitaries looked like guilty men in the presence of their judges, as they caught the direct gaze of Edward, and saw the invalid woman whose speech had inflamed the crowd against them.



"If you are in love with Edward Terrill's hat, you are welcome to it. I offer it to you with Edward Terrill's compliments."

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Addressing his three adversaries with his customary courtesy, Edward enquired whether their chief lieutenant had taken too much lamb for dinner to carry out his commission at the Fair service.

"We would like Mr. Terrill to speak a little less enigmatically when he is addressing the high dignitaries of the city," tartly observed the Lord Bishop.

"Very well," said Edward caustically. "Has George Derville had so much of the Lamb Inn liquors that he has failed to carry out the orders of my Lord Bishop of Bristol to stop the preaching service and arrest the speakers?"

"How dare you make such insinuations, Mr. Terrill?"

"Because you are coming away from the Lamb Inn, and if your Grace will turn and look, you will see your worthy henchman just leaving the inn, leaning heavily on the arms of two half-tipsy companions. And, if I mistake not, he is shouting something that is not altogether complimentary to your Grace, nor to the Mayor and Sheriff of Bristol."

Just then the wild drunken shouts of Derville reached the ears of the three perturbed dignitaries.

"I know . . . know . . . my . . . business . . . better . . . than . . . Bishops . . . Mayors . . . or . . . Sheriffs. I . . . will . . . not . . . be . . . dictated to . . . I . . . will . . . round . . . up the . . . Puritans . . . in my . . . own time."

"Come on, Bishop; we must not be seen haranguing with a drunken man in the street," said the Sheriff. And with that they hurried away.

Derville passed Edward and his party in absolute silence. There was something in the sight of that

party that subdued him. He hung his head down and took not the slightest notice.

Edward wisely refrained from saying anything to him ; and so the actors in the drama met and passed on their way : the persecutors to adopt sterner measures of repression, and the Puritans to brace themselves for the worst their adversaries could do.

CHAPTER XXIV

NECK AND NECK RACE WITH ADVERSARIES

Some trust in chariots, some in horses ;
But we will remember the name of the Lord God."
—*The Psalmist.*

WHEN towards the end of his reign it became known that King Charles had secretly embraced Roman Catholicism, and that his brother, the Duke of York, had openly avowed himself a Catholic, Nonconformists rightly concluded it would lead to more vigorous persecution.

To placate the offended Anglicans, the King, true to his shifting character, excluded all Catholics from the Court, put his signature to an Act excluding Catholics from a seat in the two houses of Parliament, and promised rigorously to enforce the law against the conventicles.

"Now is the time to strike our deadly blow against dissent in Bristol," said Bishop Guy Carlton, to the Mayor and Sheriff.

All three were agreed, and commanded Derville and Slyman to meet them and receive instructions for more drastic measures.

For reasons known to Derville, Slyman did not answer the summons. In his stead, Derville asked permission to engage one Jack Makehaste, a born detective, a stranger to the city, who would be an invaluable ally in piloting the raids, as the Puritans would not know him.

"A brilliant idea, Derville," exclaimed the Bishop.

"A brilliant idea," echoed the Mayor and Sheriff.

"Now, there's to be no more fooling, Derville," added the Bishop.

"No more fooling," again echoed the other two.

"You must strike hard, and strike quickly. No public meeting is to be allowed anywhere. And there's to be no favouritism. If you catch the Terrills, or the Wakefields and their invalid daughter, arrest them, and we will treat them with the utmost severity of the law."

"Yes, the utmost severity of the law," echoed the Mayor and Sheriff. "The King's business requires haste."

To the churches assembled at Conham House Edward reported the grave situation arising from the King's conversion to Roman Catholicism. "More than ever, must we be 'as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves.' All our meeting places are known. Let us find new ones. The woodland slope beneath Troopers' Hill is my property. If the workmen belonging to our churches would cut out a series of terraces, we could sit there upon the terraces, under the cover of the trees, and listen to the discourses of our pastors.

"The terraces could be approached from the forest road above, or from the river-side below. Conham House is within easy distance, and the subterranean passages and cellars can be entered by concealed doors in the woods."

Edward's suggestion was quickly carried out by the workmen, and there, upon those terraces, large congregations assembled in undisturbed peace.

But eventually the terraces were discovered and raided.

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The chief concern of the members now was to shield their leaders and spirit them away when the raids occurred. Scouts were posted at strategic points around the meeting places who would report the approach of the officers.

A great meeting was held in the Hanham Woods on March 25th, 1683. George Fownes was the preacher.

He had been hunted so persistently since he became the pastor of Broadmead, that his health was badly undermined. But though weak in body, he was strong in spirit, and on that day he preached a powerful sermon on the text : " I suffer trouble as an evil doer, but the Word of God is not bound."

At the conclusion of the discourse, the worshippers were startled to see the scouts running in with great speed, and George Derville and the constables who had been lying in ambush, galloping after them.

Quickly the pastor was lifted on his horse, which bounded away in the opposite direction, and was soon out of sight. Mad with disappointment, Derville galloped off to overtake him, and would have failed to do so, had not an unsuspecting woodman at the junction of the forest roads told him the way the preacher had taken. Speeding along this way, Derville and the constables soon overtook the exhausted man, and arrested him. He was committed to the Gloucester Jail for six months, which sentence was afterwards turned into imprisonment for life.

This was a terrible blow to the two united churches.

In the midst of their sorrow there came a letter from the imprisoned minister, exhorting them " not to refrain for fear of threats, from meeting publicly, and under no consideration were they to conform to save themselves, as some others in the city were doing."

The old warrior, with liberty cut off for ever, refused to hoist the white flag for himself or his followers.

The two churches pledged themselves afresh to stand firm to their Nonconformist vows, and a letter to that effect was sent to cheer the imprisoned pastor.

Frantic efforts were now made to arrest Gifford and Terrill.

"Fownes is out of the way for ever," Derville boasted. "When these other two are under lock and key for the rest of their mortal lives, then Puritanism will collapse like a pack of cards."

"Don't make too sure," interrupted Jack Makehaste. "We have not yet disposed of Lionel and Selina Wakefield and their high-spirited daughter."

"No," replied Derville, "but we are keeping them on the run. Had we been a few minutes earlier when we raided the Durdham Down meeting, on the King's birthday, we should have caught all three red-handed. We shall have them."

Andrew Gifford, as active as ever, continued to meet the churches at the prearranged meeting places. Once, when addressing a large assembly on the terraces, Derville rushed by the scouts from some unknown hiding place, and recognised the preacher. Without a moment's hesitation Andrew darted off for Conham House with Derville after him. When in the direct chase Derville felt certain of overtaking him, Andrew doubled back and eluded his pursuer; hastening on towards the retreat he almost ran into the arms of Jack Makehaste, who was hiding near the entrance gate.

Again the slim and agile pastor doubled back, and throwing off his new pursuer, by circuitous paths through the woodland he reached the secluded entrance to the Conham passages, and in a few minutes was

safely ensconced in the home of William and Martha Listun.

The next time Derville came upon him was at Brislington. By skilful manœuvring he and his men got past all the scouts, except the ever alert Emmanuel Gifford, who, recognising the intruders, ran forward and told his father. Again, Andrew made off for Conham House. The Derville pack followed in hot pursuit. The hunted man reached the river below Conham House, and was about to jump in and swim to the opposite side, when he saw Makehaste and his men waiting to arrest him.

It was a critical moment. Derville's men were close behind him, making a dash for St. Anne's Ferry impossible. Anxiously Andrew looked up at the rising ground that skirted the river for a mile to the east. Could he escape that way, with its many obstacles of hedges and ditches, and cross the river above Conham House? He was well-nigh exhausted now.

"My pursuers must be exhausted too," he reflected.

"O God, for the sake of Thy Church, help me."

He bounded forth with a new supply of energy, just as Derville rushed up to seize him.

With shouts of fury Derville's men bounded after him. But the rising ground gave the slim pastor the advantage, and when he reached the top he was relieved to find he had made considerable headway. But now a new difficulty confronted him. Looking across the river, he saw Makehaste and his men running along the tow-path, to arrest him should he attempt to swim over. Could he get far enough ahead to cross the river and take shelter in the woods before Makehaste came up? It was a daring speculation.

Again went up an ejaculatory prayer, and again came a marvellous enduement of power.

Heedless of the air-rending shouts of his pursuers, he darted forth afresh, and was gratified to find that he was outstripping them on both sides of the river. When as he thought he was far enough ahead, he plunged into the river to swim across. To his great alarm he found the spring tide was fast receding and bearing him down towards his pursuers. Desperately did he try to get across. Still the tide carried him down the river. Was all the advantage he had gained, now to be lost? Make-haste was not three hundred yards away. Again he prayed to God for help. It came. With a new influx of strength, he faced the flowing tide and reached the bank.

The next moment he dashed into the woodland cover and was safe.

Once more Andrew Gifford had escaped from his pursuers.

Derville's restless activity was very wearing. The Puritans were being hunted like partridges of the mountains. It told seriously upon their health. Still they would not conform.

The seasons came and went, and the years followed one after another, but there was no abatement of zeal amongst the Baptists of Bristol. They went to the woods in winter to worship God as on the brightest summer's day. Neither weather nor distance deterred them.

Another memorable meeting was held on a freezingly cold day in the Hanham Woods. The Puritans, all aglow with zeal, were eager to hear their great preacher, Andrew Gifford. Every precaution was taken to guard against a surprise visit by Derville. The woods were

searched, and scouts posted at every point which commanded a road.

Emmanuel Gifford, to get a better advantage for watching, sat on a stone wall looking anxiously in every direction for the first sign of the informer. Suddenly, Derville and his officers rose from a secret hiding place. Emmanuel tried to get up and run to tell his father, but he couldn't; the tails of his coat were frozen to the wall. While he struggled to release himself, Derville and his men rushed by and arrested his father.

The colliers in the audience wanted to set their pastor free, but Andrew Gifford firmly but kindly declined their interference with justice.

"I have felt justified in using every means to avoid being arrested, but now I must patiently submit to whatever sentence is passed upon me."

He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in Gloucester Jail, but all the Puritans felt that this sentence would be turned into life-long detention, as in the case of George Fownes. It was with sorrowing hearts they saw their second pastor go into his long captivity.

In their sore extremity God came to their aid. Pastor Knight, of Taunton, Pastor Whinnel of Christchurch, and Goodman Ford, a Bristol mercer, came forward to fill the vacant places, and help the churches to maintain their stout resistance. The proffered service was gratefully accepted and the struggle continued.

Edward Terrill soon became aware that he was the next man marked for arrest.

On the way to a meeting at Brislington he said to his companion, the scoutmaster, "I have a presentiment, Captain Boniface, that Derville will to-day make a special effort to relieve me of my leadership. Put the

smartest of the scouts at the outposts, and at the slightest sign of alarm I will make myself scarce."

"Right you are, Master Terrill. Trust the Captain to make a good wind-screen for you. We can ill spare the likes of you."

That day Derville took a new constable with him to arrest Edward. This constable, a total stranger and dressed like a Puritan, was to attend the meeting while Derville kept himself in the background. "You will easily recognise Terrill," said Derville. "He is the only man who wears a tall black hat. Seize him, and whistle, and we'll soon have him grinding his teeth, with Fownes and Gifford, in Gloucester Jail."

With high expectations the officer set out for the meeting. He saluted the scouts as a friend and passed on, but something roused their suspicion, and running by him, they gave the signal of alarm. Edward, who was addressing the meeting, stopped and ran off in one direction, and Captain Boniface in another.

The officer recognised the tall black hat and ran to catch the wearer. After a sharp run he caught him, and gleefully said :

"I arrest you, Edward Terrill, in the name of King Charles."

"Edward Terrill ! Edward Terrill ! Who is Edward Terrill ? "

"Why, you are," said the officer, holding him with a tighter grip.

"Well, well, well, of all the queer things in creation, that's the queerest. And by what evidence do you regard me as Edward Terrill ? "

"By the evidence of the officer in charge of this raid, who informed me that Edward Terrill is the wearer of that tall black hat."

"Well, well, well, bless my stars and old Father Neptune." And taking the hat from his head, the wearer said :

"Do you think that Edward Terrill is the only man in creation who wears a tall black hat? Here, take it, and look at it a bit closer, and perhaps you'll say I'm King Charles the Second."

The officer took the hat and read the tell-tale name inside. "Why, there is proof positive, there's your name written on the lining."

"Then I'll bow to the superior evidence of the hat and allow myself to be arrested."

The officer blew his whistle; then pulling at the prisoner's arm he blared, "Come along, Terrill, we can't stick here all day."

When Derville came up to secure his prize, his face was a study.

"What have you got here, Dullhead?"

"Why, Edward Terrill, for here's his name inside his hat."

"Nonsense, man! Why, this is Captain Boniface, a nondescript from overseas."

"Look here, Mr. Derville, none of your 'nondescript' with me. I am an honourable subject of King Charles, and have sailed all the five seas under the King's flag. If you are in love with Edward Terrill's hat, you are welcome to it. I offer it to you with Edward Terrill's compliments. Hands off, gentlemen. I am Captain Boniface, and have urgent business to transact," and with that he walked off, leaving Derville and Dullhead staring vacantly at the tall black hat.

Captain Boniface's story of his arrest was told over and over again to the Puritans, who listened with

never-failing delight to the amusing way he became a wind-screen for Edward Terrill by exchanging hats.

Another great meeting was held at Brislington on the occasion of the King's death. All the leaders who were free were present, including Lionel and Selina, who went in a carriage with Grace and Bessie Atkins.

In the event of a raid, special provision was made to protect the women. They were placed some distance from the meeting, where, hidden from view, they could see and hear all the speakers.

The conviction of the members was confirmed by every speaker that the new King, James the Second, as an avowed Catholic, would be a more formidable adversary than his brother.

"To what depths of religious fanaticism he may drag down the nation, if he is not restrained, we cannot tell; but at all hazards we will not give up our witness for the truth."

That was the unanimous decision of these two Baptist churches.

At this point, Derville, with a large company of constables, surprised the scouts and rushed in.

The leaders made off in different directions, but not before nine were arrested. Edward and Boniface, Lionel, Knight and Ford ran for the river at Conham.

So swift was Derville's drive that Edward and Boniface were forced to make for St. Anne's Ferry, while the other three made for Conham. Luckily the ferry boat was waiting, and Edward and Boniface got clear away. But unfortunately in this dash for liberty Edward accelerated heart trouble which had been showing itself for some time. As soon as he got into the boat he fainted, and would have fallen into the river had not Boniface supported him.

When Lionel, Knight and Ford reached the river near Conham, they found the high spring tide was in, and that to swim across would be difficult and dangerous. But rather than be arrested they leaped into the river and tried to get across. All three were soon in difficulties and called for help.

Makehaste and his men appeared on the other side and would have rescued them, but Derville and his men rushed up and shouted, "Let them alone. Let them drown, and a good riddance to them. Knock them down, knock them down!"

The noise Derville's men made was so great that the cattle in the meadow were frightened, and ran helter-skelter away. Several persons passing saw the men struggling for their lives, but none dared to render any assistance.

Seeing that he was unable to arrest the drowning men, Derville ordered all his constables to get away, "and leave the fellows to their fate."

Goodman Ford was the first to throw up his hands and sink. Pastor Knight struggled on a little longer, and was about to sink for the last time, when a Kingswood collier, passing with a child in his arms, put down the child and plunged into the river and pulled him out, apparently dead.

All eyes were now on Lionel, who was making a brave effort to keep afloat. He had become entangled in some knotted brushwood, growing out from the bank. His strength was failing fast. Desperately he struggled to set himself free, but in vain. Unconsciousness was stealing over him; the next moment he collapsed and sank into the watery grave.

In that moment a rushing sound was heard among the bushes on the hillside, and out jumped a man, who,

flinging his outer garments to the wind and crossing a strip of grass at great speed, dived into the river.

In entering the water he struck his head against a hidden tree stump, and when he came to the surface the water was stained with blood. But quite regardless of his injury he swam with powerful strokes to the drowning man, and tearing him away from his entanglements, brought him quickly to land. The collier who was attending to Pastor Knight, stopped and helped the blood-stained rescuer to lift Lionel from the river.

Tying a cloth around his own bleeding head, the stranger worked away at artificial respiration. For some minutes there was no sign of life. Then consciousness slowly returned. Stooping down, the stranger enquired of Lionel where he would like to be taken.

"To Conham House," he whispered. "But where is Pastor Knight?"

"A collier, who rescued him, has taken him to his own cottage at Pile Marsh, to get him into hot blankets as quickly as possible."

"But where is Goodman Ford?"

"He is dead, and his body is carried away on the receding tide."

Lionel heaved a heavy sigh.

"Where is George Derville?"

"He and all his men are gone," said the colliers who witnessed the crime. "They assumed that no one would dare to rescue you, and they left you all to perish in the river."

"God forgive them," whispered Lionel.

These witnesses helped the stranger to carry Lionel to Conham House. There he was received by William and Martha Listun, and speedily put between warm blankets and given nourishing stimulants.

The stranger, unable to do anything further, was leaving the house, when he swooned from loss of blood, and lay for a long time insensible.

William and Martha dressed his wound and had him carried to a bed in a quiet room, where they tenderly nursed him because of his brave act in saving Lionel from drowning.

Though the collier and his wife gave Pastor Knight every kindly attention, he failed to recover from the shock, and passed peacefully into rest.

For some time, it was feared that Lionel would not recover from the shock, and that a third death would have to be recorded, but gradually his strength returned. His first act was to visit his unknown rescuer, who was lying in a precarious condition in the next room.

An afternoon was chosen when the stranger seemed a little better.

As Lionel entered the room the sunken eyes of his deliverer were fixed upon him, and though much altered by his sufferings, Lionel saw in a moment that he was face to face with his life-long adversary, Robert Slyman.

For a few seconds the two men were speechless. Visions of the Castle walls, the dungeon, Grace lying on its horrid floor, and her suffering life, came like a flash before Lionel's mind.

"Robert Slyman, is it to you I owe my marvellous deliverance? You are the last man in the world I should have counted amongst my friends. May I ask what led you to become my rescuer?"

"The vision of your suffering daughter," said Slyman with a deep drawn sigh. "Derville and I were on duty at the Newgate when your daughter was driven to the Fair service. Being struck by the bright intelligent face of the invalid, I asked Derville who she was, and was

told that she was your daughter, and had been a helpless invalid ever since she fell into the Castle dungeon. In a moment I was smitten with a terrible feeling of remorse. Had I known that sweet child of yours would have fallen into the trap I set for you, I would never have set it. I fled from the city in terror when the news leaked out, and though I never ceased to work out my grudge against you, I never realised my wicked folly had so terribly maimed that dear child's life.

"I have had no rest day nor night since I saw her. I cursed Derville for the part he took in the affair, and parted from him, and ever since I have been frustrating all his plans to get her arrested. I was in hiding at Brislington with sufficient helpers to protect her and save her from arrest, should Derville make an attempt to do so.

"When I found that Derville's men were chasing you to the river, I whispered to my companions to see the women safely back to their home, and then I ran at top speed to see what help I could render the invalid's father."

"And you arrived in the nick of time," said Lionel. "A minute later and I should have been beyond all human help. I shall ever feel grateful to you, Slyman, for saving my life. But tell me why you have nursed a life-long grudge against me?"

"Because you felled me when I was making off with some girl from Dorothy Hazzard's house. I know now my purpose was a wicked one, and I am profoundly thankful you frustrated it, but I was mad at the time, and my madness made me an easy dupe to George Derville.

"Can you forgive me for the awful wrong I have done you and your dear child? My wound gives me great pain, I feel that my days are numbered, and I would like to die forgiven."

"I forgive you, Slyman, and I know my dear wife and child will forgive you, but the forgiveness which counts the most is God's forgiveness. Do you wish for that?"

"I do. I would not die without it. But will He forgive such a sinner as I?"

"He will."

Then very tenderly Lionel spoke to the penitent of God's plan of salvation.

"I see it," he whispered. "I believe it. And now I shall die happy, forgiven both by God and man." And with that he closed his eyes, overcome with the great effort of unburdening his soul, and fell asleep.

When he awoke a smile suffused his face, and to Selina, who came in to see him, he said softly, "I have seen my Saviour. And He told me I am not to die, but live, and manifest His grace in a transformed life. Call me not Robert Slyman any more, for I am a new creature. Call me henceforth Robert Newman, for God has made me a new man."

CHAPTER XXV

DARKNESS AND DAWN

" I knew by the smoke that so gracefully curled
Above the green elms that a cottage was near,
And I said, ' If there's peace to be found in this world,
A heart that was humble might hope for it there '."

—*Moore.*

THE shadows were darkening thick and heavy about the Puritans. Every man's hand seemed to be against them. Informers were multiplying daily, partly because to inform was popular, but chiefly because it was profitable.

But though some Puritans conformed to avoid being fined, and others paid the fines rather than suffer imprisonment, with but one or two exceptions the Puritans of the two Baptist churches remained as true as steel.

The correspondence of Grace Wakefield revealed the terrible facts that throughout the country thousands of Puritans had died in prison, and thousands of others from diseases contracted while detained in the filthy cells.

Amongst the many whose death the churches mourned in Bristol, were Henry Jessey, of London, the founder of many churches in the West; Joseph Alleine, of Taunton, a young and brilliant preacher; Thomas and Margaret Wakefield, in Newgate Jail, London; Gerald and Rebecca Listun, from dreadful diseases contracted when imprisoned in the foul dungeons of Exeter; and George Fownes, after serving two years and nine months of his life sentence in Gloucester Jail.

When this pastor's death was reported the churches were deeply moved, for he was the third minister in succession Broadmead had given to the cause of freedom. Thomas Ewins, Thomas Hardcastle and George Fownes will ever be illustrious examples of fidelity, courage and self-sacrifice.

All human sympathy seemed to have vanished from the hearts of the persecutors. Lionel Wakefield, Pastor Knight, and Goodman Ford were mercilessly left to drown in the river.

At the inquest on the body of Goodman Ford, an impanelled jury of nineteen men returned a verdict of wilful murder against the perpetrators of the crime, whereupon the coroner issued his warrants for their arrest and ordered the Mayor to execute the warrants. But that unscrupulous administrator of the law refused, and the murderers went unpunished. There was no mercy and no justice for Puritans.

Andrew Gifford, whose term of imprisonment had expired, had not returned, and reports were in circulation that he, like George Fownes, was being detained for life.

William and Martha Listun were failing rapidly. The river casualties gave them such a shock, as very materially to hasten their end.

Lionel's recovery was so slow that it was deemed advisable for Selina and Grace, and Muriel's beautiful daughter Salinie, to go to Conham House to take over the nursing. Bessie Atkins and the other maids went with them, and the Castle House was closed down.

To add still further to the troubles of the Puritans, Edward, upon whom so much depended, had broken down in health under the prolonged strain, and the doctor gave little hope of his recovery.

Would the troubles of these faithful people ever come to an end? Would the persecution continue until they were all exterminated? Was it to be death for all who continued the struggle?

When Lionel was sufficiently recovered a united meeting was held in Conham House. There was a large company present, and Lionel presided. Edward, William and Martha were carried in their chairs to the assembly room, as they were very anxious about the future of the Puritan cause.

"Many in the city are for conforming," said Lionel, "but I can never conform again. Having put my hand to the plough I cannot turn back."

"Though bitter has been the cup, I must drink it to its very dregs," said Selina. "I cannot conform."

"I have never conformed," said Grace, very firmly, "and I never will. They may cast my suffering body into prison, but they shall never imprison my soul. My father and mother and my martyr brothers and sisters have shown me how to endure, and, like them, God helping me, I will remain true to my Puritan faith."

William and Martha exhorted every one to remain faithful.

Edward Terrill, leaning on Kathleen's arm and with gasping breath, expressed his undiminished confidence in Nonconformity.

"God will not suffer us to be tempted more than we are able to bear, but will with the temptation also give us a way to escape. I have fought for victory, and victory will come, but how long it will tarry I cannot say. Having come so far, can we not go the little way more? Having suffered so much, can we not endure the small remainder? Weak and helpless as I am, I hope

to see the crown put upon these fifty years of conflict. But if I don't, I trust to the loyalty of the Pithay and Broadmead Churches to stand by the cause they have so ably espoused.

"This is the hour of darkness, darker yet may come the night. Will you go back and conform, or will you go forward, enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ?"

With one united voice the members exclaimed:

"We will keep on. We will never conform. We are convinced that God is with us, though the hand of the adversary is heavy upon us. Most of our leaders are either dead or disabled, but we have Lionel, Selina, Kathleen and Grace still with us and able to lead. They show to us a dauntless spirit, and we will stand by them."

"We hope," said Lionel, "we may yet have Andrew Gifford to inspire us with his exhortations, and to hearten us by his example. Let us pray for his speedy return to his troubled followers."

There was prolonged silence, when every one present earnestly prayed for the return of the minister, who for so many years had been their star of hope.

In the silence every sound was noticed, for the fear was strong upon them that the meeting might be raided and the last of their leaders taken away to die in prison.

Suddenly, they were startled by the sound of a galloping horse coming along the drive towards the house. They rose from their knees to see who the horseman could be.

But while they stared through the window and saw no one, the hall door was quietly opened and in came Andrew Gifford disguised as an English sea captain.

"Quick, friends, get to the subterranean passages. Derville and his men are coming down from Hanham. I passed them just as they were leaving the wood, where they have been looking for you, and as I passed I heard Derville shout, 'They must be at Conham House, let's trap them there!' I put spur to my horse and came on with all speed. Come down into the passages quickly."

One glance at William and Martha and Edward told Andrew how ill they were.

"We invalids will stay here," said Edward, "and Kathleen and Grace will stay with us. But the rest of you go to the cellars."

In a few minutes they were gone, and the entrance door, which was in the kitchen, was cleverly concealed.

"Are you afraid, dear?" said Edward to Kathleen.

"No, Edward dear, not for myself, but I am afraid the shock will be too much for you and dear father and mother."

"God will take care of us, darling," said Martha. "Our times are in His hands."

"Yes, child, God will take care of us, and——"

A tremendous noise of horses and men on the drive cut short the sentence William Listun was uttering, and a moment later George Derville burst through the hall door, followed by his men, demanding the surrender of all the Puritans there in unlawful assembly.

Derville stood transfixed for a second when he saw the change the illness had wrought in the appearance of Edward and the aged Listuns.

"You may well look amazed, Derville," said Edward softly. "Your handiwork is operative in other ways than by prison cells. I am old and weak before my time, but my purpose remains unchanged. What is your purpose to-day, Derville?"

"I come to arrest you all for being in unlawful assembly."

"Then you will arrest three who will not trouble you long. But, George, have I not told you often to look before you leap? We are members of one family."

"But where are the Puritans who have been here to-day?"

"Does George Derville expect his old protagonist to turn informer?"

"They are here, and I will have them," raved Derville.

"Then you must look for them."

And with that Derville and his men went from room to room in search of the Puritans.

In the kitchen Derville found Bessie Atkins, the younger maids, and Salinie, the orphan daughter of Maurice and Muriel Listun, all of whom played an excellent part in covering the retreat of the fugitives. Though they were plied with many questions, none of them could be drawn to give any information concerning the whereabouts of their friends.

The entrance to the cellars was concealed behind an array of brightly-polished culinary dish covers, of which Bessie seemed to be very proud. The men chaffed the maids about their polishing.

"Yes," said Derville, taking down one of the dish covers to see his own debauched face in its polished surface, "they polish the things like this to look at their pretty curls and roses."

"Here," said Bessie Atkins, knocking Derville on the shoulder with a wooden ladle she held in her hand, "you get out of my kitchen, talking such rubbish as that." And seizing the dish cover, she told them to go

and mind their own business and not come there teasing respectable maids, and hindering them in their work.

The men retreated, and the maids uttered a sigh of relief, and so did the fugitives on the other side of the secret door.

"Hullo," said Derville, as the men rushed into a bedroom, "what have we got here?"

"You have got Robert Slyman, who is no longer the hack of George Derville, and the upholder of an effete National Church, but the voluntary slave of Lionel Wakefield, and henceforth to be a stout supporter of the Puritan cause.

"You can stare, George Derville, but I have no room for murderers who will leave honest men to drown in the river. That is not English, it is certainly not Christian. The wound I am slowly recovering from was obtained in rescuing the man whom you left to die, and whom I had grievously wronged—Lionel Wakefield. This scar will be the sign of my emancipation from your evil influence. Lionel Wakefield has forgiven me, and God has forgiven me, and now I am no longer Robert Slyman, the tool of George Derville, but Robert Newman, by the grace of God."

"Come on," said Derville to his men. "Let's get out of this haunt, or else we shall soon be as crazy as this demented inmate."

"George!" called Edward, as the informer passed his room to leave the house. "George, this may be the last time we shall meet on earth. You have caused great suffering and many deaths. Are you satisfied? It is hard to kick against the goads. The Puritan Church is the goad of God in this evil generation; by it He will prod the National Church until she is truly reformed. I have always felt sorry for you, George, for

you might have lived such a useful and noble life. Slyman has seen the error of his way, and is now a new man. God can do the same for you, George. Will you let Him ? ”

Derville listened quietly to every word Edward spoke, for in his heart he had great admiration for the doughty champion. A keen observer might have noticed from the twitching of his facial muscles that a great contest was going on in his heart. What would the issue be ?

There was a momentary pause, and then the tightly-drawn lips snapped out, “ Never ! Never ! As I have lived, so will I die ; but let me say, Edward, if I never see you again, you have lived a good life, and I envy you the glory that will come with the dawning of the new day.”

Having spoken thus with manifest sincerity, he flung himself out of the house, a picture of a miserable, mis-spent life. As Edward feared, the two men never met again.

When the house was clear of all intruders, Bessie moved the dish covers, and gave the signal to the hidden congregation to come forth. The large bolts on the other side of the concealed door were drawn back, and out stepped Lionel and Selina, Andrew and Hannah Gifford, their son Emmanuel and Captain Boniface, and all the others who had so successfully spirited themselves away.

Great was the rejoicing over the return of Andrew Gifford, but greater still was the rejoicing over the news Andrew Gifford brought them.

“ God was with me throughout my imprisonment,” began the returned pastor, “ and enabled me to be of great comfort to our sainted brother, George Fownes.

We both ministered to the felons in prison, and made several converts. Then our dear friend, whose health was never robust, passed peacefully into rest. His dying message was : ' Continue in the faith, Andrew, and tell the churches to do the same, for God will crown your labours in the end.'

" At the close of my term of imprisonment the rumour came to me that I was to be detained for life. I resolved that I would test the value of the rumour, so at midnight I called for the Governor to come and see me.

" ' Yes, Gifford,' said he, coming into the cell. ' What do you want with the Governor at this time of night ? '

" ' My immediate release,' I replied.

" ' Your release ! We don't open prison gates at midnight to let prisoners out ! ' was his cheerless answer.

" ' You opened the prison gates at midnight six months ago to let me in, for the city clocks were chiming twelve as I passed through the gates, and you have no authority to keep me a minute after midnight. I therefore respectfully request you to release me.'

" The Governor could not gainsay that reasoning. In the absence of authority he durst not detain a prisoner beyond the legal term. And so, as the clocks of Gloucester city chimed the midnight hour, the gates of the prison were opened, and I walked out into liberty. I went to the house of a friend in West Street, to rest until the morning, intending to come on to you with all speed as soon as it was light.

" I was at the door at six o'clock, about to leave, when a horseman galloped past whom I recognised as the King's courier. I saw him rush up to the prison gates, and instinctively felt that that hurrying messenger had something to do with my imprisonment. So I

stepped back into the house and entered the martyrs' secret chamber. My friend went out to ascertain the news. By and by he returned looking very distressed. 'The King's command is that Andrew Gifford must be detained a prisoner for life. The Governor is in a great fury. His warders are scouring the city to get you back, lest he may fall out of royal favour for releasing you so promptly. God be praised that you are free. Stay here under my roof, and when it is safe you shall go back to Bristol.'

"And there I stayed until this morning, when my brother, Captain Samuel Gifford, came to Gloucester searching for me. Through this friend of our family he soon located my whereabouts.

"He greeted me in his jovial, brotherly way, and then added, 'Andrew, my brother, come out of this, you need not fear any further trouble. Persecution is ended; Prince William of Orange lands at Brixham to-day, and to-morrow begins his march on London. I was with the Prince the day before he sailed for England. He wanted me to pilot his vessel down the channel, but remembering the fearful bloodshed which followed the rising of the Duke of Monmouth, I begged to be excused. But I left the port twenty-four hours before the Prince was due to leave, so as to be the first to bring the news to my harassed brother, and the suffering churches in Bristol. I hope, Andrew, the Prince of Orange will prove a real deliverer.'

"I jumped for joy and shouted, 'He will, Samuel! He will, Samuel! The nation will flock to his standard, and King James will have to flee, for the nation will never tolerate a Roman Catholic King again. But to prevent any miscarriage, Samuel, let me disguise myself in your sea-captain's uniform, and let me have the

loan of your fine horse, and I'll get off to Bristol with the good news at once.'

"And, friends, here I am. I knew not where I should find you, but I made for Conham House, and had the good fortune to see Derville making his fruitless search around our dear old meeting place in the Hanham Woods. I chanced to hear what he shouted to his men as I galloped past, and was just in time to save you from another of his surprise visits. By to-morrow the official news will reach Bristol that William, Prince of Orange, has landed, and in a few days will be proclaimed King William the Third.

"The long night is past, the morning has dawned. The Prince has pledged himself to give religious liberty to all his subjects."

The Puritans were so overwhelmed with the good news that they wept and shouted for joy. Then falling upon their knees, they gave thanks to God for His providential deliverance in their darkest hour, and prayed for God's blessing on the new King and the promised liberty to all his subjects.

Very affecting were the farewell words of William and Martha and Edward. They had borne up bravely under all the excitement of the afternoon, but it was evident the end was not far off.

Edward voiced the feelings of himself and Kathleen's parents, and thanked the members of the two churches for their magnificent loyalty through so many dark years of trial.

"We would like to have stayed a little longer to taste the sweet fruits of victory, but the Lord's will be done."

Then looking all his friends steadfastly in the face, he said: "We have fought a good fight, we have

finished our course, we have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for us a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give us at that day. Continue ye in the faith." And with that exhortation he bade all his friends farewell.

At the request of Edward, Andrew and Hannah and Emmanuel Gifford remained behind for a little while longer.

When the room was quiet, the dying champion said, " Andrew, my friend, it is a great joy to live to see this day, and it is an added joy that you have brought the news. We have missed you sorely during your long absence, and feared they were detaining you as they did our beloved Fownes. I pray that you and Lionel here may live to guide the churches until another pastor comes to Broadmead, and when the promised liberty is embodied in an Act of Parliament, gather all our fellow-believers together for a thanksgiving service in the Hanham Woods, where thirty years ago we solemnly pledged ourselves to life-long consecration for the cause of freedom.

" My parting prayer is that young men in our churches may be willing to consecrate their lives to the ministry of Jesus Christ, so that the faithful ministry of our martyr pastors, Ewins, Hardcastle and Fownes, and last but not least your own, Andrew, may be continued in the coming generations.

" To assist in the training of such young men, I am leaving my estate after the life interest of my family has expired, to be devoted to the foundation of a Baptist Academy in Bristol."

" God bless you, Edward," said Andrew with a great lump in his throat. " You have been valiant in your life, and now you are noble in your death. The churches

will revere your memory, and the academy will perpetuate your spirit for all time."

Andrew, seeing a change come over Edward's face, stepped aside for Kathleen to have the last word with her beloved husband.

"Kathleen darling, I shall soon be leaving you. Your love has been very precious to me. Through all the years of conflict you have been my ever-cheering partner. We have suffered together, but you have never complained, nor advised any relaxation in the contest.

"For your sake I am glad the dawn of peace has come, and for your sake I could wish to live a little longer. But my life's work is ended. I shall be waiting for you on the other side. God be with you, darling, until we meet again."

He put his arms around her neck, and drew her face to his, and as the lips of the lovers met, the spirit of Edward Terrill answered the summons of the King.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Amidst many manifestations of love and esteem the mortal remains of Edward Terrill were laid to rest in the Almondsbury Church, where he had received his earliest religious training.

Rejoicing in the knowledge that the sufferings, imprisonments and banishment of the Puritans had helped to bring a brighter and better day to England, William and Martha Listun survived Edward by only a few weeks, and then passed upwards to meet their martyr friends in the home of their risen Lord.

CHAPTER XXVI

JUBILATION

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod,
They have left unstained what there they found,
Freedom to worship God."

—*Felicia Hemans.*

THE landing of William, Prince of Orange sent a thrill of joy throughout the whole Puritan world.

"Now is our salvation nigh," acclaimed the Puritans.

"Be not too sure; remember Monmouth," replied their persecutors.

But as the news came through of the enthusiastic rallying to the Prince's standard of men of commanding influence from all over England, it became more and more certain that this revolution would succeed, and the Prince become the accepted King of the people.

The progress of the Prince was followed with the keenest interest by the Puritans in Bristol.

The flight of King James gave immense relief to every one who remembered the evils of the Civil War. It enabled the nation to welcome with open arms a Prince whose character was above reproach, and whose Protestantism allowed freedom of worship for every subject in the realm.

The coronation of William and Mary in itself guaranteed a brighter and happier England.

The Pithay and Broadmead meeting houses, which had been closed for five long years, were opened without

restrictions, and the members and ministers assembled without any fear of interruption.

When in due course the pledges of the Prince were incorporated in the Toleration Act, and became the law of the realm, united thanksgiving meetings were held on Terrill's terraces, at Conham House, and in the Hanham Woods.

Amongst the jubilant host were Job Bacon and Harry Wakefield, who had returned from New England to rejoice with their friends.

Though in these places their worship had often been secret, there was nothing clandestine about their jubilation, for they made the welkin ring with their psalms of praise. They sat on the terraces, and recalled the peace which had come to them in the midst of their fears; they went down into the subterranean passages which had often been a covert in the time of storm; they stood with heads bowed at the riverside where the plunge for liberty resulted in the death of two fugitives and almost a third; they marched in a triumphal procession from Conham House to the Hanham Woods, singing the 126th Psalm, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad," and there, on the spot made for ever sacred, they paid glowing tributes to their sainted comrades and pastors, who had fought and fallen in the conflict, not seeing the day of deliverance.

Lionel and Selina recalled the days when as yet there was no Free Church, and when under the leadership of William Yeamans, they met for spiritual fellowship in various homes. They extolled the memory of Dorothy Hazzard, that great-souled mother in Israel, who led them out of spiritual bondage, into the wilderness of struggle and sore persecution, and though not

permitted to see the Canaan of liberty, yet never doubted but what the churches would one day reach it.

As Lionel and Selina spoke out of their long and varied experiences, the hearts of all their hearers waxed lovingly towards them both, for they were beloved by all who remembered their bonds, imprisonment and transportation, and remembered their numberless services to the suffering and dying at home and in Jamaica. They had given their lives to the cause of religious liberty.

In 1638 they were a young and handsome couple with life all before them, but now the marks of fifty years of struggle had given them another kind of beauty, which suggested that life was still before them and not far off—the beautiful life of heaven.

Kathleen could not refrain from wishing that her dear parents and husband had lived a few months longer to have shared the joy of that thanksgiving day.

“They loved the Free Churches and gave themselves unsparingly to them. Their lives and example must ever stir us to noble endeavour.”

Kathleen's triple bereavement drew out the tenderest sympathies of the Puritans towards her. They loved her for her beautiful self-effacing life. She had borne a noble part in the consecrated purpose of the Church. She had experienced the nausea, and the damp and chill of prison cells. Her husband had been torn from her side by numberless alarms, and only his keen judicial mind had saved him from the miscarriage of justice. She had loyally stood by her husband in all his efforts to liberate the soul of religion; and when in his vision of a Free Church, permitted and protected by the law of the land, he suggested the ultimate disposal of his estates towards the foundation of a Baptist

Academy in Bristol, she gave the proposal her sincerest benediction.

Grace followed her friend with such beautiful tributes of praise to those who through much tribulation had entered into glory, that they were likened to garlands of fragrant and never-fading flowers.

Then referring to those who had survived the fiery trial, she said: "We thank God for them all. Their lives have been beautiful. They gilded their trials with golden splendour. They made darkness to be light round about them. They drowned the babel cries of persecution in cheerful songs of praise. They never wearied, they never despaired. Their hope shone the brightest in the cloudiest day.

"Though worn with toil, bowed with anguish, aged with suffering, their faces were lit up with the beauty of the Lord. They are happier to-day than kings, because the King of Kings has been their unfailing portion."

And as she spoke glowingly of her parents, her one surviving brother, her pastor, Kathleen, and the faithful followers of Christ all around her, everyone in that charmed circle felt that she herself had been the bravest of the brave. Heavily handicapped all her life by an affliction so wickedly brought upon her, yet she never bore the slightest malice towards Slyman or Derville, and never complained about her physical limitations. In pain and weakness she kept up an inspiring correspondence with persecuted Baptists in England, America and the West India Islands, enthusing them all with her own bright optimistic spirit.

If the superlative degree of praise could be applied to anyone that day, that person was Grace Wakefield. She was the happiest person in the whole company,

happy because persecution was ended, happy to be able to take part in the celebration, and happy because Robert Slyman had saved her father from a watery grave.

Job Bacon, the sole survivor of the four men who, with Dorothy Hazzard, started the first Free Church in Bristol, was constrained to offer a tribute of praise to Roger Williams of Rhode Island.

"I am delighted to be back in England on this happy occasion. Rhode Island Colony has enjoyed religious liberty for many years. My friend and colleague, Roger Williams, the founder of the colony and the founder of the first Baptist Church in America, obtained a charter of religious liberty from the Parliamentary Commissioners in England, and such has been the success of the experiment, that the other colonies in America are asking for similar charters.

"It was my joy for many years to be the associate of this great champion of religious liberty, and with him to preach to white men and Red Indians alike the Gospel of redeeming grace.

"Five years ago Roger Williams, honoured, beloved and trusted by the Red Indians as 'the great white chief,' laid down his ambassadorship, and is now at rest with God. Roger Williams has planted in the American soil a seed-principle that will spread to every colony. In this pioneer work he was ably assisted by John Clarke and Chad Brown."

Harry Wakefield testified to the triumph of religious liberty in the Old Colony.

"The colony which in 1635 expelled Roger Williams and inflicted dire penalties on other champions of liberty, has allowed John Myles to transplant within its border at Swansea the church which was driven

out from South Wales in 1662. This Baptist Church, the first in the Old Colony, is now free and flourishing, and other Baptist churches are growing up around it.

"Not only has the colony allowed this, but the order of expulsion issued against Roger Williams was rescinded, so that Roger Williams was free to return.

"The labours of my colleague, John Myles, have had a most salutary influence over the colony. Though dead, he yet speaks. His memory is cherished by all the settlers, and in a few months I hope to return to continue the grand work to which he devoted his life. Bristol may rely upon the Old Colony upholding for all time the banner of religious liberty."

Andrew Gifford, no longer needing to disguise himself, then addressed the assembly. He was given a rousing reception, and no wonder. He had not only survived the intensest persecution directed against himself, but as a minister in the city he had stood like an immovable rock in a torrential stream. When persecution led to the premature death of Thomas Ewins, Thomas Hardcastle, and George Fownes, when the leaders in other Puritan churches were weakening and their followers conforming, Andrew Gifford with unwavering courage continued his matchless methods of resistance.

Lionel Wakefield voiced the opinions of the whole assembly when he said: "Had Andrew Gifford wavered, Puritanism would have been lost in the West."

Andrew Gifford began his speech in his usually quiet and measured style.

"This is a grand day, a great occasion, an eloquent issue. Faith has triumphed over force. Patient endurance has defeated the evil machinations of kings, and priests and subordinate dignitaries. We have fought for freedom, and freedom we have won, to

become henceforth the rightful heritage of our children and children's children to the end of time.

"The way we have travelled is trailed with blood, but it is blood willingly shed in a holy cause. Our ranks have been thinned, but they have never bent nor yielded.

"We have lost heroes and heroines of priceless value to the Church : Thomas Ewins, Thomas Hardcastle and George Fownes, the martyr-pastors of Broadmead ; Dorothy Hazzard and Edward Terrill, whose inspiring ministries will make Broadmead glorious all over the world. We thank God for every one of them.

"We thank God for the martyr children of the Pithay Church, for Maurice and Muriel Listun, sleeping yonder amongst the slaves and criminals of Jamaica for whom they lived and died ; for Thomas and Margaret Wakefield, who languished in the loathsome Newgate Jail, London ; for Gerald and Rebecca Listun, who were so emaciated by their long imprisonment in Exeter Jail that they both died soon after leaving that pestilential prison.

"We thank God for William and Martha Listun of fragrant memory, for Pastor Knight and Goodman Ford who so recently laid down their lives, and for all the others who during the past fifty years have suffered and died in the holy cause.

"Yes, and I thank God for those of you who with myself have survived the tribulation : for Lionel and Selina Wakefield and their noble, inspiring example of self-sacrifice, patience and service ; for Grace Wakefield, the life-long sufferer from a dark and sinful plot, who by the grace of God has beautified her sufferings, as the pearl oyster glorifies a painful irritant, and by the consecration of her gifts, as the correspondent of the

churches, has been the evangel of cheer to the suffering saints at home and abroad.

"I thank God for Kathleen Terrill, the true friend of us all, the devoted wife of a great scholar, saint, and defender of the faith.

"I thank God for Captain Boniface and Robert Slyman, who daily witness to the transforming power of God in the soul.

"And I thank God for my dear Hannah here beside me, who has ever been my angel of love and light, cheering me onwards in the darkest hour of my ministry.

"And I thank God for all my children, and to my son Emmanuel, who desires to walk in his father's footsteps as a minister of the Gospel, I would say: 'You have learnt to endure hardness as a soldier of Jesus Christ. Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.'

"Friends and companions of the chequered way, we have reached our desired Canaan. Our jubilee of tribulation coincides with our day of jubilation. Let us give God the praise."

In a prolonged silence broken only by the rustling of the forest leaves, Andrew Gifford led the joyful Puritans into the audience chamber of the Eternal King, and offered their thanks for all the mercies of the way. "We thank Thee, O God, for Thy crowning gift. Bless Thy royal servants, King William and Queen Mary, and long may they reign over a loyal and united people."

"Amen," came the fervent response from the whole congregation.

EPILOGUE

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

—*Longfellow.*

LIFE was beautifully restful to the Puritans in the years which followed the Toleration Act. The different Free Churches in Bristol settled down to develop their religious life and extend their usefulness.

The open-air preaching stations were periodically visited, and services held there to keep the memory green and to impress the young and rising generation with the repeated stories of their parents' heroism.

The site in the Hanham Woods was purchased, and eventually a meeting-house was erected to consecrate for ever the spot which had been like a sheltering rock in the time of storm. The old meeting-house still stands, a silent and solitary witness to a heroic age, but the old encircling forest has long since disappeared. Industrialism and the ever-growing population of the adjacent city have encompassed it, so that trees have given place to dwelling-houses and forest tracts to spacious roads and avenues.

Externally, Hanham is totally unlike what it was in the seventeenth century. Its quiet, secluded characteristic is gone. Noisy commercialism protrudes on the meditation of the worshippers within the walls of the once quiet sanctuary. But the spirit of the seventeenth century survives unchanged. As then, the soul

sought its fulness in the unfettered worship of God, so now, in the old meeting-house, as well as in the stylish modern building by its side, the soul rejoices in its freedom to go, in its own way, into the presence of God.

With the passing years the principals in this story passed one after another to the full realisation of their earthly hopes.

Captain Boniface was ready when the call came. Having no dependents of his own, he bequeathed all his possessions to Salinie, the only child of Maurice and Muriel Listun, who, dying so young, were unable to provide for their daughter. He lived long enough to see Salinie make a definite decision to live a religious life like that of her parents and grandparents.

The Captain's last words were: "Thank God for Maurice and Muriel. Genuine articles were they both. God bless Salinie."

Lionel and Selina lived several years and exerted a fragrant influence upon the church in the Pithay. The younger generation often invited them to speak of their experiences in prison and on the plantations. This they loved to do, because of the opportunity it gave them to extol the goodness of God. These talks made indelible impressions upon the hearers, and were again and again repeated long after their authors had gone to their reward.

One of the never-to-be-forgotten acts of Lionel, when Robert Newman had recovered from his wound, was to employ him as butler and general handy-man at the Castle House. In this capacity Robert evinced the most exemplary Christian life, which fully justified his substitution of "Newman" for his old surname.

Here he came into daily association with that virtuous woman, Bessie Atkins. Friendship developed into love,

and eventually Robert ventured to make his love known to her. Bessie was naturally very hesitant. She still remembered the incident when as a girl Slyman attempted to carry her away from the raided house. Though she knew Robert Newman was a very different person to young Robert Slyman, the drunken sailor, yet she felt it prudent to well consider the proposal. Lionel persuaded her to marry Robert.

"Bessie, never has the grace of God worked a more complete change than in the heart of this man. You and Robert are well advanced in life, but you may yet have several years granted you in which you may be a real comfort and joy to each other. You can make your home at the Castle House, and you can continue to nurse Grace between your own domestic duties."

This decided Bessie, and in due course she and Robert were married. When the wedding ceremony was over, Bessie humorously said, "Robert, you have this time succeeded in carrying me off."

"Have I ever tried before, Bessie?"

"Yes, Robert. Once when Lionel Wakefield stopped you, but this time he gave me to you."

"Was that girl you, Bessie?"

"She was, Robert."

"I never knew that."

"I know you didn't."

"And now you trust me, Bessie, and are not afraid. Why is that?"

"Because now we love each other, and perfect love casteth out fear."

Lionel and Selina were very happy over this union of hearts. It was the closing event in their long and chequered life.

The end came very peacefully to them both, and they passed out to receive the "Well done, good and faithful servants; enter ye into the joy of the Lord."

They were beloved by all who knew them. Never was the Church of Christ more faithfully served than by Lionel and Selina Wakefield.

After the death of her parents, Grace made her home at Conham House with Kathleen. There they enjoyed each other's company for several years. No two sisters ever loved each other more than these two life-long friends.

By the wintry evening fires, or in summer's sunshine, on the spacious lawn, beneath the chestnut trees, they would sit for hours and talk of the bygone years, and of the heroic deeds of Edward, their parents and their sainted brothers and sisters.

Their lives were brightened by the devoted services of Bessie and Robert Newman, who took up their abode at Conham House. Robert made his invalid mistress his daily care. He could not do too much for her. His chief delight was to take her with Kathleen and Bessie out in the carriage, when she was able. Sometimes they would go where they could catch a glimpse of Edward's terraces through a clearing in the woods. At other times they would climb the hill and visit the old meeting place in the woods where Kathleen and Grace would recall memories of days for ever gone. But the place Robert liked best of all to take his mistress was by the river, where he saved Lionel from a watery grave. Grace loved that spot too, and sometimes would ask Robert to tell her over again how he came to do such a heroic thing. With tear-dimmed eyes Robert would relate the story, and finish by saying :

"Mistress Grace, if I could undo the injury I caused you in your girlhood, I would willingly endure any physical suffering."

"Don't grieve, Robert," Grace would say. "You did it ignorantly in unbelief. God has blessed my affliction, and it is a real joy to me to be waited on so kindly by you and Bessie."

In this atmosphere of Christian fellowship the years passed pleasantly along at Conham House.

Every day brought the inmates nearer to their eternal home and the dear ones who had gone before.

One day Grace was answering a letter she had just received from a friend of her brother Harry in the Old Colony, when the heavenly messenger came. The letter she was answering bore the news that Harry had finished his earthly ministry, and had been called into the higher service.

Kathleen was sitting in a lounge chair close by her side, for she felt that Grace more than ever needed the comfort of her presence.

After a few sentences were written, the writer, dropping her pen, softly said, "Kathleen, are you here?"

"Yes, dear; what do you want?"

"I am going to leave you, dear."

Kathleen drew her head down gently until it rested upon her own breast. The eyes opened and looked intently into the face of her dearest friend.

"Kathleen, I see them. They are so lovely Good-bye . . . dear . . . come . . . soon. Jesus . . ."

And the spirit of Grace Wakefield winged its way from the limitations of its suffering body into the infinite freedom of the redeemed of God. It was a lovely passing.

Kathleen lived in the glory of it until another memorable day dawned at Conham House, when her spirit rose in regal splendour and passed triumphantly into the realms of light.

Bessie and Robert survived them several years, and testified to the saving and keeping power of the grace of God.

George Derville, on the other hand, gave way more and more to his drinking habits. He became hopelessly involved in debt. Now that the Toleration Act was passed, neither Bishop, Mayor nor Sheriff had any particular interest in his liberty, so when he was cast again into the debtor's cell, he was left severely alone. The filth and stench and chill which had terminated the pilgrimage of so many Puritans, very quickly affected the drink-sodden body of George Derville, and he died, unloved and unlamented, in the Newgate Jail.

Hannah Gifford lived to extreme old age, and vied with her husband in being the last of the martyr band. She lived to see her husband's dream materialise in the building of the meeting house in the Hanham Woods in 1714. She lived to see her son Emmanuel co-pastor with his father. She lived to witness the marriage of Emmanuel and Salinie, yea, long enough to bless their first-born child, who in after years became Dr. Andrew Gifford, the famous pastor of Broadmead Church.

Then came the end, calm, beautiful, serene, and the soul of Hannah Gifford soared heavenward through a cloudless sky.

Andrew Gifford was as wonderful in his old age as he had been throughout his life. With the assistance of Emmanuel he continued the pastoral oversight of the church in the Pithay and her first offspring at Hanham. He made numberless itineraries into the

neighbouring counties, starting new churches and resuscitating old ones. He promoted a union of the churches in England and Wales, but more particularly in the West.

While he was whole-hearted in blessing Edward Terrill's proposal for a Baptist academy in Bristol, he also advocated the founding of a similar institution in London, and in 1690 collected fifty pounds from the Pithay Church for that purpose. When questioned why he was such an earnest advocate of ministerial training when neither he nor his son had received any educational advantage, his characteristic reply was: "For that very reason."

Known as the "Apostle of the West," he was much sought after by the churches, and exerted a commanding influence throughout the denomination. He, who had so often eluded his pursuers by his clever disguises, appeared now to be eluding the shadow feared of man.

Though spare in form and frail in appearance, he possessed superabundant energy. He carried his advanced years with remarkable agility.

But in 1721 the shadow overtook him. In great contentment the old warrior laid down his arms, which had never yielded to mortal foe, and patiently waited for the summons of his Lord. He reviewed with gratitude his long and eventful life, and declined to take any credit to himself for what had been accomplished. It was ever God working in and through him of His good pleasure.

Emmanuel and Salinie and their infant son Andrew were with him when the end came.

"Children," said the dying saint, "you have both suffered trouble as evil doers, but that is now past and gone. The Word is free, and free are you to proclaim it.

These are priceless privileges. Darkness has vanished, the light is come. Walk ye in the light that ye may be the children of the light.

"I hand over to you, Emmanuel, my pastoral staff. Be faithful. And to you, Salinie, the watchful care of Emmanuel. My dear Hannah, whom I am soon to meet, was ever my daily inspiration. Be to Emmanuel what Hannah was to me. God bless you both."

Then placing his hand upon the head of the infant Andrew he said: "God bless you, child; may you grow up to enter and to nurture the Church of God. God wants consecrated men in every generation."

While he spoke, the hand dropped, his eyes closed, and Andrew Gifford, the last of the reformation princes, passed into his heavenly princedom.

THE END

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